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## SUMERIAN MYTHS OF BEGINNINGS<sup>1</sup>

BY MORRIS JASTROW, JR.  
University of Pennsylvania

### I

In the June number for 1914 of the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* (XXXVI, 188-96), Dr. Stephen Langdon published an article under the title, "A Preliminary Account of a Sumerian Legend of the Flood and the Fall of Man," to which Professor Sayce added a note (pp. 196-98) substantially accepting Dr. Langdon's interpretation and adding some comments. From four lines of the fragment which Dr. Langdon translated as follows,

O my King, the deluge sweeps away,  
Yea, the deluge sweeps away.  
His foot on the boat straightway he set,  
And two . . . guards he placed,

he concluded that the text, which he believed was "A Hymn to Ninḥarsag or Aruru"<sup>2</sup>—a view for which there is no warrant—contained an account of a deluge, which he furthermore concluded lasted for nine months. Dr. Langdon at the time did not publish the fragment, but merely summarized the results of his study, commenting on two other passages. In one of these he found a reference to a certain Tagtug (as he read the name), written with the determinative for deity, but designated as "gardener." This Tagtug is summoned by Enki to his temple, where secrets are revealed to the gardener. Langdon concluded from the addition of the determinative for deity to the name that Tagtug had attained immortality and thus became "divine." The name itself he explained as a reduplicated form of the root *t-g* with the meaning "rest, abide." Taking this reduplicated form as the Sumerian equivalent of Semitic *nāḥu* "he is appeased," Dr. Langdon concluded that we have in Tagtug, "with

<sup>1</sup> Langdon's "Critical Notes upon the Epic of Paradise" appeared in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, XXXVI (September, 1916), 140-45, four months after this article of mine had been handed to the Editor of the *AJSL*. References to this article of Langdon's are added in my footnotes, inclosed in brackets.

<sup>2</sup> The identification of Ninḥarsag with Aruru can hardly be regarded as certain.

great probability, the Sumerian original of the Hebrew Noah"—certainly an important discovery, if it could be verified.

The second passage to which Dr. Langdon called special attention was one in which he found a reference to the eating of a plant *am-ḥa-ru*, which, on the basis of *CT* XIV, 18, 26, he correctly identified with *kasû*, the well-known cassia, of very frequent occurrence in Babylonian medical texts. Dr. Langdon concluded from the passage in which the reference to the plant occurs that it was a forbidden fruit, through the eating of which the one who partook of it forfeited immortality, and that the one "who committed this great disobedience" was none other than Tagtug, "the Sumerian Noah." In the Book of Genesis, Langdon argued, Adam was in some way substituted for Noah—again a very important discovery, if verified. It is only proper to add at once that the name "Tagtug" *does not occur* in the passage in which the plant *am-ḥa-ru* is spoken of.

The publication of this preliminary account of an important fragment naturally aroused a deep interest. Professor Sayce had no hesitation in announcing the discovery as "far-reaching," and scholars looked forward eagerly to the more complete publication.

In a later number of the *Proceedings* (November, 1914, pp. 253-64), Dr. Langdon published a supplementary paper on the tablet, of which, in the meanwhile, two further sections had fortunately been found in the University of Pennsylvania collection, furnishing an almost complete text.<sup>1</sup> This was a lucky chance indeed. Dr. Langdon published the photographs of the obverse and reverse of the tablet, which contained a text of unquestionable interest and value.

Summarizing the results of his supplemental study, Dr. Langdon in his second paper announced that the tablet opened with an account of a paradise as pictured by the Sumerians and which was located in Dilmun, according to Langdon to be sought on the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf. The lines furnishing a description of this supposed paradise speak of a time and place, according to Dr. Langdon, when "absolute peace prevailed," "where men lived sinless, free from disease, and knew not old age." Langdon maintained his

<sup>1</sup> The top of the reverse and a portion of the middle are defective and weatherworn, which seriously interferes with obtaining a good text for a considerable portion of cols. IV and V and for the first 18 lines of col. VI.

view that, in addition to a picture of paradise, the tablet also furnished an account of a deluge, brought on by Enki in order to destroy mankind, though Langdon admitted that the cause of Enki's wrath was not very clear. From a single line reading,

He [i.e., Enki] said, "Unto me man enters not,"<sup>1</sup>

Langdon was inclined to conclude that man had failed to show proper respect for Enki.<sup>2</sup> The passage containing the description of the flood, which Langdon claimed lasted for nine months, was translated in full. All, however, that the passage as it stands says is that for one day in each of nine successive months "the fields received the waters of Enki." In order to get a flood of nine months' duration out of this passage, Langdon is obliged to assume that the text is characterized by brevity, and that in the mention of the first day of the first month, the second day of the second month, the third day of the third month, and so on for nine months, the mention of one day in each month is a reference "to well-known stages in the rising, endurance, and receding of the waters." He thus gets a duration of eight months and nine days, with the ninth day of the ninth month as the period of "the cessation of the waters."

Enlarging upon the passage in which the supposed forbidden fruit, or rather, plant, is referred to, Dr. Langdon found that six other plants are enumerated<sup>3</sup> as having been plucked and eaten, but despite this he clung to the view that the cassia plant alone was forbidden, and that it was Tagtug (although the name does not appear) who transgressed a divine command by eating of it, by which act he brought death into the world. In his second article Langdon, however, modified the view expressed in the first article that the cassia corresponded to the tree of life or to the tree of knowledge in Genesis.

The bulk of the second article is taken up with a discussion of two supposed schools of theological thought in ancient Babylonia, the school of Eridu and the school of Nippur, to use Langdon's designations. Since all that he says in this discussion rests upon the correctness of his interpretation of the tablet, we can leave this aside till we have tested the interpretation itself. We are now in a position

<sup>1</sup> For an entirely different explanation of the line, see below, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, it is a goddess, the consort of Enki, who utters those words.

<sup>3</sup> There are really eight, not seven.

to do so, thanks to the publication of the text in a complete form,<sup>1</sup> photographs, a copy of the text, transliteration, and translation with elaborate discussions of the interpretations proposed, the bearings on biblical tradition and supposed parallels, the doctrines regarding creation, deluge, and the forfeiture of immortality taught in ancient Babylonia. Our industrious author has also extended his investigations to fields lying outside of the Sumerian and Semitic fields.

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Langdon, *Sumerian Epic of Paradise, the Flood and the Fall of Man* (University of Pennsylvania Museum, Publications of the Babylonian Section, Vol. X, No. 1, Philadelphia, 1915). It is only proper to add that only the first fragment of the text was copied by Dr. Langdon in Philadelphia and that for the balance of the text—by far the greater part—he relied upon the photographs that had been sent him. The best photograph is, however, no complete substitute for the original, and it is therefore not surprising that, as a result of a collation undertaken by my pupil, Dr. Edward Chiera, and myself, we were enabled to correct Dr. Langdon's text in many places. The most important of these are here noted for the benefit of those who wish to make an independent study of the text.

Col. I:

- 15 and 16. The seventh sign is *ub*.
- 17 and 18. The sign before the last is in both lines *ub*.
- 18. The first sign appears to be *dun* (Br. 9864) or *šul*.
- 19. The sign after *bi* is *nu*=not.
- 28. The third sign is *zag* (Br. 6459).
- 32. The last sign is *zu*.

Col. II:

- 24. Langdon's fourth and fifth signs are to be taken as one *dirig* (Br. 3739), though *kalag* (Br. 6194) also is possible.
- 25. The first sign is *uš*, just as in ll. 24 and 26.

Col. III:

- 1. The name of the goddess here, as well as in ll. 5 and 8 (also to be supplied, l. 20) is *Nin-šar*, to be distinguished from *Nin-tu* or *Nin-tud* (col. II, 21, 23; also to be supplied, col. II, 44).
  - (1) Last sign appears to be *bi*.
  - (2) Third sign is *zuk* (Br. 10300).
- 3. The signs after the determinative for deity are *Kur igi-gunnu-nun-me* (Br. 1202), to be read *Usmû* or *Isimu*, a deity specifically designated as the *sukkallu ša Enki* (or Ea), i.e., messenger of Enki, precisely as in Langdon's text. See *CT*, XXIV, 16, 45=29, 94. This important identification, which also clears up the parallel lines col. III, 6, 23, 26, and col. V, 16 and 19, is due to Dr. Chiera. Langdon translated these lines, "Her herald the divine anointed ones called," and, "Her herald the divine anointed ones caused to return," whereas the lines should be rendered "He [i.e., Enki] called his messenger Isimu," and, "His messenger Isimu returned to him." (Dr. Langdon independently made the correction in a supplemental series of notes in the *PSBA* [December, 1915].)
- 4, 5, 7, 8. Sign before last is *ub*. Read therefore *su-ub-bi* in all these cases, as well as ll. 24, 25.
- 11. After the third sign read the notation for 2/3 followed by *im* (Br. 4816) and the phonetic complement *ma*, instead of the sign *maškim* proposed by Langdon; similarly, l. 31, except that the notation there appears to be 1/3, though no doubt it is also 2/3.
- 12. Last sign is *ub*; so also l. 32.
- 21. Read *mi-ni* [*ib-bi*], as in l. 1.
- 27. Last five signs are *su-ub-bu(?) -ma-ni*; and therefore to be supplied also in l. 28 43 and 44. Read *zuk-ra*, as in l. 2.

There is lacking, however, a real commentary to the text justifying the readings and explaining the renderings. A few footnotes take the place of the full line-for-line commentary that is called for in the case of a first translation of a difficult Sumerian text. Sumerian at present occupies the position that Babylonian, or, to give the more correct term, Akkadian, did some thirty years ago. The general features of the grammar are known, but many details still escape us, so that a first translation of a Sumerian text is necessarily tentative; and this applies to all texts except to the short votive inscriptions and the short legal documents, containing stereotyped phrases known to us through their Akkadian equivalents. It is therefore quite natural that scholars having a first tentative translation before them

Col. IV:

- 18, 19, and 20. The first sign appears to be *giš*—the determinative for trees and plants; similarly ll. 35, 36, 46, and 47—and not the sign for "house," as Langdon reads. This latter sign appears distinctly at the beginning of l. 39, and is quite different from the first sign in ll. 18, 19, 20, etc.
18. The second sign, as also ll. 35 and 46, looks like *mir* (Br. 6947).
20. The fourth sign does not appear to be *su*; it looks like *pu*.
36. Sign before last is *si*.
41. Seventh sign is *giš*, followed again by *mir*, as in ll. 18 and 46.
42. First sign is *šam* (Br. 4681), "price."  
[Langdon in his "Critical Notes" (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 142) questions this, saying that "it has not the least resemblance to this sign in the epigraphy of the period." Dr. Chiera, whose large experience in copying tablets of the same period to which Langdon's text belongs entitles his opinion to great weight, assures me that he has come across many examples of the sign *šam*, made as on our tablet. He is quite sure that the reading *šam* is correct.]
45. Instead of *aš* and *gar*, read together as one sign *šur*.
48. Langdon has omitted *si* or *sig* (Br. 3374), after *ab*. The following sign is *gi* and the verb is therefore *sig* (*gi*).

Col. V:

17. The two signs after *be* may be *tar-da*.
26. The plant in this line is *a-pa-šar*.
34. Last sign is *bi* (not *teg*), just as in ll. 20 and 22.
36. Last sign may be *di*, but it is not at all certain.
40. First sign is quite clearly *lul* (Br. 7265); so also fourth sign of l. 42. The eighth sign of this line is *da*, not *ra*.
42. Read *En-lil* (*li*).
44. Third sign is *a*, not the notation for two; sixth sign is *bi*; eighth is probably *ni*.
45. First sign is *lul* (Br. 7265).
47. Fifth sign may not be *Gibil*; it looks like *Gu* (Br. 3200).

Col. VI:

7. Read *En* (*dingir*) *Šeš-ki*, i.e., *Nannar*.
8. After *dingir* the sign *Nin* is quite certain. Read *Nin-[ib]*?
30. Eighth sign is to be read *gig*, just as in ll. 24, 27, 32, etc.
41. Langdon's copy of the signs between *en* and *im* is inaccurate, though I confess that I cannot determine the correct reading. [He now reads *En-zag-aga*, which is surely wrong.]
42. Read one sign *šur* instead of *aš* and *gar*.
46. Is omitted in Langdon's copy, though included in his transliteration.

should be able to improve upon it. No one would think of reproaching Dr. Langdon if it should turn out (as I believe it will) that his entire interpretation of the text must be revised. There would still remain many lines which he has correctly rendered, and he would still have the credit of being the pioneer in the decipherment of this tablet. He lays himself open to criticism, however, on two grounds: (1) on the score of presenting his translation as *definite* instead of interspersing it liberally with interrogation marks; (2) in shifting his ground constantly and introducing new conjectures and even new readings, merely in order to bolster up his interpretations. He must by this time himself realize that many of his renderings are impossible.<sup>1</sup> It seems a pity, therefore, that he should have added to his edition of the text an elaborate introduction, full of the most improbable conjectures resting upon the supposedly definite character of his translation, which will all fall to pieces if the translation of crucial lines should turn out to be incorrect.

It may be worth while to give a few examples also of the manner in which Langdon changes his mind with regard to the translation of crucial lines, without apparently seeing that the translation affects his general interpretation of the tablet.

In his first article (*PSBA*, June, 1914, p. 188) he translated col. III, 9 and 29,

O my king, the deluge sweeps away,  
Yea, the deluge sweeps away,

where the occurrence of the word "deluge" is, of course, crucial to show that the text speaks of a destructive flood overwhelming the world. Now in the second article (as also in the published volume) the line in question becomes (*PSBA*, 1914, p. 258):

My King who was filled with fear,  
Yea, was filled with fear.

<sup>1</sup> So, e.g., the translation of the first line. "They that slept, they that slept are ye," is most improbable and stands in no connection with the following lines describing how a god and a goddess "alone" dwell in a holy mountain. Again, what possible sense is there in such a rendering as col. I, 27, "'A man has changed a canal,' one said not," or l. 29, "'A deceiver deceives,' one said not," or col. II, 26, "His counsel in secret grandly and beneficently to her he affirmed," or col. II, 30, "Cause him to sleep for me," or col. III, 2, "Enki (for me) they are reckoned, yea are reckoned," or col. III, 43, "Oh, thou one man, for me [they were reckoned, yea were reckoned]"? What is meant by two "humbles" (col. II, 11 and 31) placed as watchmen to guard the ship, which in the popular summaries in the daily press became "bumbles"? I defy anyone to make sense of Langdon's translation of col. I, 26, "A pure place where water was not poured for cleansing in the city one inhabited not," or col. IV, 48, "The divine Tagtug was confided," or col. V, 45, "The

With the *direct* reference to a deluge thus eliminated,<sup>1</sup> the only line that remains suggestive of the escape of a favored individual from a great catastrophe is one (col. III, 10 and 30) reading:

His foot alone upon the boat set.

The word rendered "alone" is the sign for "one" (*aš*), and in his first translation Langdon translated it "straightway," which is more plausible than to assume that the word points to the escape of a single individual. In a supplemental article entitled, "The Sumerian Epic of the Fall of Man," published in the *Expository Times*, January, 1916, pp. 165-68, Dr. Langdon rendered the line in question:

Alone upon the boat awaited him.

It is no longer the hero of the deluge who steps upon the boat, but the god Enki who, as Langdon now correctly recognizes, is the one referred to as "My King." Unwilling, however, to abandon his theory that the passage refers to a deluge from which Tagtug escaped he adds, without any warrant, the word "him" and makes this pronoun refer to Tagtug, although the latter's name does not occur at all in the table *until thirty lines later!* Is it conceivable that any writer describing a deluge and wishing to convey to his readers the fact that someone has escaped should refrain from mentioning the survivor's name? How, except by a species of divine intuition, should anyone suppose that "him" should refer to someone whose name does not appear at all in the passage in question? Moreover, there is no justification in the Sumerian signs comprising this line for adding "him" to the verb, and the correct translation of this line, which is perfectly simple, is,

He made straightway for the boat,

the reference being, as will be set forth farther on, to the god Enki sailing in his boat.

renowned—his head as a prototype, she had moulded," or col. VI, 42, "Since grandly were they born, (grandly) they do," or col. V, 38, first rendered (*PSBA*, November, 1914, p. 192), "Henceforth life until he dies let him not behold," and then in the published volume (*Sumerian Epic*, etc., p. 82), "The face of life until he dies not shall he see," out of which mysterious words Langdon read the condemnation of mankind to death, as a result of an act of disobedience. On the face of it the line would seem to show just the contrary, that man will not see real life till he dies—which, to be sure, would make the line the earliest example of an Irish bull. The examples of such obscure or impossible readings could be multiplied, and it would surely have been better for Dr. Langdon to have left the lines untranslated than to tempt his readers to question the sanity of the Sumerian author.

<sup>1</sup> Properly so, since "deluge" in the former translation was a pure guess and a bad one at that.



Again, the very important passage in which the eating of the supposed forbidden fruit is spoken of is first rendered as follows (*PSBA*, 1914, p. 191):

[. . . the plant] *am-ḥa-ru* [i.e., cassia] he touched.  
 . . . he ate.  
 . . . the plant which wrought their fate therein she came upon.

The English of the last line is obscure, but Langdon interprets it as pointing to disastrous consequences following upon the eating of cassia. Now in the second article (*PSBA*, 1914, p. 261) as in the final volume, the crucial line becomes:

. . . the plant, its fate she had determined; therein she came upon it.

Langdon, having once made up his mind that a forbidden fruit is spoken of in these lines, does not see that his second rendering obliterates the possible reference to its being a "forbidden fruit," so essential to his theory.

When Langdon wrote his first preliminary article he had merely found one fragment of the tablet, containing a reference to *one* plant only—the *am-ḥa-ru*, which he correctly identified with cassia. There was, therefore, some justification at least for assuming that the plant was singled out as being forbidden. Through the two other fragments it was evident that no less than eight plants were mentioned, and since of all of them the same words are used, "He shall cut off, he shall eat," or "He shall pluck, he shall eat" (col. V, 20–35), the only conclusion to be drawn was obviously that *all* were to be eaten. There was no longer anything exceptional about ll. 33–34, in which the cassia is mentioned, particularly as Langdon's rendering "approached" rests upon a misreading *ab-teq* instead of *ab-bi*, as the text clearly shows in agreement with ll. 20 and 22. The same verb, *mu-na-ab-bi* "commanded," is used with regard to *all* eight plants. For all that, Langdon clung to this theory, though any basis that may have existed for it was removed both by his final rendering of l. 36 and by the discovery of the missing portion of col. V immediately preceding the reference to the cassia.

In the supplemental article in the *Expository Times* above referred to, Dr. Langdon furnishes us with another illustration of his strange method of making his text accommodate his theory. In the two

articles in *PSBA*, as well as in the published volume, Dr. Langdon was of the opinion that "My King," referred to in connection with the command to pluck and eat the eight plants in question (as in the episode of the supposed flood, col. III, 9), was intended for his favorite Tagtug, although the name does not occur *in any portion of the column* in which the eight plants are referred to. He then found out that "My King" is a title used throughout the tablet for the god Enki.<sup>1</sup> Since it would have upset his theory to translate the line in which the cassia plant is referred to as he did in the two articles of the *PSBA*, and in the published volume, namely,

(My King) the cassia plant approached,

he deliberately supplies some other words at the beginning of the line which he now renders (*Expository Times*, January, 1916, p. 168),

(At that time) the cassia plant he approached,

suggesting, furthermore, in a note, that possibly instead of "at that time" the name "Tagtug" was mentioned here. He adds in this note, "My previous restoration *lugal-mu* (i.e., 'My King') was erroneous." Why? Evidently, merely because it would have set

<sup>1</sup> Independently reached by me (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 132).

[Now after reading the summary of my interpretation of the tablet in the *JAOS*, XXXVI, 122-34, he has become convinced that the reading "My King" at the beginning of l. 34 is correct, and that the verb at the end is *mu-na-ab-bi* "commanded," as in the parallel lines. He has also recognized the absurdity of making so useful a plant as the cassia, which is constantly prescribed in Assyrian medical prescriptions (as pointed out by me in *JAOS*, XXXVI, 128), the forbidden plant the eating of which caused the loss of immortality, but instead of seeing that all this knocks the bottom out of his thesis, he still persists in his search for a forbidden fruit and finds it in l. 36, the translation of which is now changed for the third time to

Enki, the plant whose fate he had determined, therein placed.

The "she" has become masculine, and, in order to force a parallel to the biblical account of a tree in a garden, he changes the rendering of the last part of the line. Losing sight of the fact that l. 36 is to be correlated with l. 17 where the "determination of the fate of the plant" or plants is likewise introduced, he proposes to see in l. 36 a reference to a plant that was not to be eaten. He admits that no specific plant is named in this line, also that nothing is said about the unnamed plant being forbidden, that Tagtug has been eliminated altogether, that no command is given to him not to eat of an unnamed and not forbidden plant—all this he frankly admits on p. 143 of his recent article and then adds, "that is precisely the point." Tagtug was not to know that there was a forbidden plant! If Tagtug who is not mentioned does not know it, how did Langdon find it out? The answer is that "texts of this kind are so abbreviated in detail that the succession of ideas baffles the decipherer for many hours." We must "infer" all that the text does not state—so Landgon actually puts it, and he further tells us that the account of the fall was purposely abbreviated by the schoolmen; "that indescribable disaster of humanity formed a subject too painful to be dwelt upon." That the text is abbreviated is a pure assumption and an idle one at that; and if it were the case, how can Langdon or anyone tell what the scribe of four thousand years ago left out?

aside the entire theory of the plant as having been eaten by Tagtug. The fact is that his former restoration was exactly correct, as a glance at the passage will show. In connection with each one of the plants we have the line,

My King as to the plant . . . . commanded;

so in ll. 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, and evidently to be supplied (as Langdon does) in ll. 30 and 32. Now since the verb at the end of l. 34 is also "command" and not "approach" as Langdon, erroneously reading the last sign as *teg* instead of *bi*, translated, it is, of course, self-evident that the words "My King" must also be supplied at the beginning of l. 34.

## II

Let me begin the analysis of the text by pointing out the interesting relation that Langdon's text bears to a Sumerian fragment published by Dr. Arno Poebel two years ago in his volume *Historical and Grammatical Texts*, Pl. 1,<sup>1</sup> containing in the preserved portions—upper part of the obverse and lower part of the reverse—references to the settlement of man in cities, to the creation of animals, and then passing on to an account of a destructive flood from which a favorite Ziugiddu<sup>2</sup> escapes in a large boat. Langdon recognized in a general way (p. 14) the relation between the two texts, but he might have gone farther and seen that they are actually parts of *one and the same series*. Both tablets have three columns on the obverse and three on the reverse, the writing is identical, and, what is especially significant, the width of the two tablets is *exactly* the same. We may, therefore, safely assume that the length is the same, so that we can estimate the size of the missing portion in Poebel's text which, let us hope, by a fortunate chance may still turn up in the Nippur collection of the University of Pennsylvania. Moreover, the locality—which plays a prominent part in the first section of Langdon's tablet—read by him "Dilmun"<sup>3</sup>—occurs in Poebel's text (col. VI, 12) as the place to

<sup>1</sup> Publications of the Babylonian Section of the University of Pennsylvania Museum (Philadelphia, 1913), Vol. V, together with Vol. IV, No. 1 (translations and discussions of some of the *Historical Texts*), and Vol. VI, No. 1 (translations and discussions of the grammatical texts).

<sup>2</sup> Langdon, on the basis of a fragment published in the *Sumerian Epic*, p. 88, and Pl. IV\* (No. 4, obv. 2), wants to read *Zi-ut-sud-du*, but the third sign is clearly *gid* and the reading *u* for the second sign is preferable to *ut*, though *ut* is possible.

<sup>3</sup> See below for a discussion of this proposed identification.

which Ziugiddu is transferred after the deluge. It is described as a "mountain" just as in Langdon's text (col. I, 4, 5, 6) and, moreover, is followed by the sign *na*—presumably a phonetic complement—just as in one case in Langdon's text (col. VI, 50), though here it is not preceded by the sign *kur* ("mountain"). There are also expressions common to both, as, e.g., *na-ri-ga-mu* (Poebel, col. IV, 5) and *na-rig-mu* (Langdon, col. III, 41). The gods mentioned in Poebel's text, Nintu, Enlil, Enki, Ninħarsag, Šamaš, are the ones introduced in Langdon's text;<sup>1</sup> and among these Nintu and Enki are particularly prominent in both. Granting the connection between the two, we may furthermore conclude that Langdon's text comes first, followed by Poebel's. If, therefore, Langdon's is the first of the series, Poebel's might be the second;<sup>2</sup> and since Poebel's fragment gives in full the account of the deluge in which all mankind perished except Ziugiddu, it is unlikely that Langdon's tablet should also contain an account of the flood. This of itself is sufficient to dispose of the second of Langdon's theses, that his tablet describes the flood and that the hero who escapes is Tagtug (as he reads the name),<sup>3</sup> quite apart from the fact that in Poebel's, as in all other versions of the Sumerian-Babylonian deluge as yet discovered, the storm lasts six or seven days, whereas what Langdon takes for a description of the flood in his tablet lasts nine months according to his interpretation (p. 6).

Let me now take up the first of Langdon's three chief theses, to wit, that his tablet contains in the first column a description of a primeval paradise. The text opens (col. I, 1-12) with a description of a locality which, since we do not know its reading, we will call X, in which a god Enki and his consort dwell "alone" (ll. 7 and 10), i.e., plainly where this divine pair are the *only* inhabitants.

<sup>1</sup> Anu, however, mentioned in Poebel's text in conjunction with Enlil or with Enlil and Enki, does not occur in Langdon's tablet so far as preserved. Or should we regard An in Poebel's text as a general designation for deity and not as the equivalent of Anu?

<sup>2</sup> It is not necessary to assume that in the Sumerian texts the same kind of colophons were used as in later Babylonian and Assyrian texts. The colophon in Langdon's text merely contains the exclamation *Zag-sal=tanittu* "praise" or "glorification," suggesting the *Selah* of the Psalms. See Meissner, *SAI*, 4669.

<sup>3</sup> On this reading and on the question whether the hypothetical Tagtug is a man or a god, see below, p. 129. Sayce (*Expository Times*, November, 1915, p. 88) has also rejected Langdon's thesis that the tablet speaks of a deluge; and so have Barton (*Archaeology of the Bible*, p. 282) and Prince (*JAOs*, XXXVI, 91). In fact, both of these scholars, as well as J. P. Peters in a review of Langdon's book (*Churchman*, January 1, 1916), reject all three theses, just as I do.

The opening lines read as follows:

[Holy is the place]<sup>1</sup> where you are,<sup>2</sup>  
 The mountain X is the holy place.  
 Holy is the place where you are,  
 [Alone(?)] the mountain X is the holy place.  
 The mountain X is the holy place, the mountain X is pure,<sup>3</sup>  
 The mountain X is pure, the mountain X is resplendent.  
 [Alone] did they lie in X.  
 There Enki and his consort lay.<sup>4</sup>  
 That place was pure, that place was resplendent.  
 Alone in X [did they lie].<sup>5</sup>  
 There Enki with Ninella<sup>6</sup> lay.  
 That place was pure, [that place was resplendent].

The locality mentioned seven times in this passage is written with two signs, or a compound sign, the first element of which appears to be *sal* and the second *tuk*. The place is spoken of as a mountain (ll. 4, 5, 6), but again as a country or locality (*ki*, ll. 7–13) and later on (l. 33) as a city. That the determinative for land and the designation of the place as a city are intended to be taken as synonymous follows from col. II, 2–3, where the one line begins, “Thy city,” and in the next the locality X is followed by *ki*. This interchange between *ki*<sup>7</sup> (the determinative for “land”) and the sign for “city,” while significant, occasions no special difficulty. “City” and “place” are used as synonyms to indicate an inhabited site, or one that is fit for habitation. On the other hand, it is worth noting that in l. 33 the locality appears without either *ki* (“place”) after it, or *kur* (“mountain”) in front of it—owing perhaps to the fact that immediately after

<sup>1</sup> I supply at the beginning of the line [*ki-azag-ga*]-*am*, as at the close of l. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *e-ne-ba-am me-en-gi-en* must be taken together as a single phrase. The first word is to be decomposed into *ene* “they or you” with *ba-am* “to be” the combination having the force of the relation “where are,” followed by *mengen* “you”; or as a possible alternative—the first line asks the question, “What is the holy place where you are?” to which the second line gives the answer. So, again, ll. 3 and 4.

<sup>3</sup> I.e., sacred or holy.

<sup>4</sup> Or “were placed.”

<sup>5</sup> Abbreviated line, as so frequently in Langdon's text. E.g., col. I, 12, 23–25, 30, 33, 34; col. II, 3, 6, 14, 18, 23, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Langdon without giving any reason takes Ninella as a descriptive epithet, “the pure divine queen,” although in l. 31 he takes the same term as a proper name. See below, p. 112 f.

<sup>7</sup> The sign occasionally (e.g., I, 13) looks more like *tu*, but so does the second sign in the name *En-ki* (l. 11). In all cases the sign is no doubt intended for *ki*, as is clearly shown in l. 8.

the name, the word for "city" occurs. Clearly the sign for "city" must be taken in the very general sense as an inhabited place, or a place to be inhabited, and is used to specify this general character of the place.

Langdon reads the name of the place Dilmun. As a conjecture, this reading would be in place, but it is rather misleading to indicate the reading as *definite*, since he himself points out (p. 8, n. 1) that the sign for Dilmun is written *ni-tuk* and that this is the case even in Sumerian inscriptions. He refers the reader to IV R<sup>2</sup> 36, No. 1, col. 1, 21,<sup>1</sup> which he compares with the form in his text and which he also reads Dilmun, although the first part of it is quite different. The sign in IV R appears to be the sign for the district Kish<sup>2</sup> and at all events has nothing in common with either *ni-tuk* or *sal-tuk* except the last element, which, having the force "to be," might form an element in various names. The probabilities are therefore all against identifying our sign with that for Dilmun, and the only point in favor of such an identification is the circumstance that in the last line of Langdon's text (col. VI, 50) the compound sign is followed by *na*,<sup>3</sup> which might be a phonetic complement. This by itself, however, is not conclusive. The question might be raised whether our sign may not be identical with the city or land occurring in IV R 36, No. 2, col. 2, 14 (between Babylon and Nineveh), and which is composed of *še* and *tuk*. Comparing the sign *še* in IV R with *sal* in Langdon's text, the difference is quite slight, and a careful re-examination of the line in IV R might reveal that they are actually identical. However, all such conjectures are out of place; and at all events the equation of our sign with Dilmun rests on a very uncertain foundation and may, in fact, be set aside as highly improbable.

Exception must also be taken to Langdon's location of Dilmun as part of the mainland. Following a suggestion of Jensen,<sup>4</sup> Langdon places Dilmun on the eastern coast of the Persian Gulf, but also "including the islands off the coast perhaps as far as the strait of

<sup>1</sup> The sign occurs again in col. II, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., e.g., *CT*, III, No. 1, and Hilprecht, *Old Babylonian Inscriptions*, I, 2, No. 93.

<sup>3</sup> Also in the text published by Poebel, *Historical and Grammatical Texts* (Philadelphia, 1913), Pl. 1, col. 6, 12, and again in a list of temples in Poebel's volume No. 157, 2, *E-sal-tuk(na)*, name of a temple in Ur.

<sup>4</sup> *ZA*, XV, 225.

Ormuz and the Arabian Sea" (p. 10). He adds this qualification in order to account for the specific statement—repeated several times—in an inscription of Sargon that "Upiri, King of Dilmun, who made an abode in the midst of the sea," etc.,<sup>1</sup> and from which most scholars have drawn the natural conclusion that Dilmun was an island.<sup>2</sup> Nor is there any force in Langdon's contention that when Sargon says that he conquered the land Bit-Jakin on the shore of the salt stream (i.e., the Persian Gulf) up to Dilmun that this proves that "Dilmun and Bit-Jakin form a contiguous territory," especially if we consider that Sargon does not say, as Langdon translates, that he ruled this territory "as one land," but "altogether" (*mithariš*). Poebel (*Historical Texts*, p. 62), although not quoted by Langdon, is also disposed to make Dilmun part of the coast land, but he minimizes, it seems to me, the weight of the evidence presented by the discovery of an inscription on one of the Bahrein Islands containing the name of the god *In-za-ag*, without question identical with *En-zag*, specifically named as the god of Dilmun.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, the patron god of Dilmun is Nebo, as numerous passages show,<sup>4</sup> rather than Enki, who in Langdon's text must necessarily be the protecting power of the "holy place." One would be inclined to guess that the name X is another designation for Eridu, the central seat of the Ea cult, except that there are no mountains in Southern Babylonia. The emphasis laid on the circumstance that this dwelling-place of Enki and his consort is a mountain suggests a place in the mountain districts to the north of Babylonia and Assyria—perhaps at the supposed common source of the Euphrates and Tigris. The *pî narâti*, or "source of the streams," to which, according to the Babylonian tradition, the hero of the deluge, Ut-napishtim, is also transferred after the deluge (Gilgamesh Epic, col. XI, 204), there to dwell "like the gods"—presumably, therefore, also with the gods—would then likewise have to be sought in the distant mountain regions of Armenia or elsewhere

<sup>1</sup> See the passages quoted by Langdon, p. 9, n. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See the discussion by Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 178. See also the passage in an inscription of Ashurbanipal (Clay, *Yale Oriental Texts*, I, No. 42, 9, *ni-tuk(ki) ša ka-bal tamti šaḫ lit*, i.e., "Dilmun which is in the middle of the lower sea"), clearly pointing to Dilmun as an island in the Persian Gulf.

<sup>3</sup> *CT*, XXV, 35, obv. 20.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., the text quoted in the previous note; also *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 42, 106-7; and Jastrow, *Religion Babylonians und Assyriens*, I, 117.

to the north; and it will be recalled that in Poebel's text (col. VI, 12) our place X to which Ziugiddu is removed after the deluge is specially designated as a "mountain."

The persistency of the tradition among both the Babylonians and the Hebrews as to the landing of the ship after the deluge on a mountain<sup>1</sup> is an echo of the old Sumerian tradition embodied in our text, which places the original dwelling of the first divine pair in a mountain—a conception natural to a people themselves living in a mountainous country. That Sumerians once had such a mountain home is shown by so many indications as to be beyond dispute, even though scholars differ as to the location of this home.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, upon coming as conquerors to a mountainless region like the Euphrates Valley, the old myths were modified to adapt them to new conditions, and so the "mountain" to which the survivor of the deluge is transferred to be with the gods becomes a "*distant* place—at the mouth of streams," with an implication of lying far beyond the Persian Gulf, and eventually pictured as an "island of the blest." The same natural tendency to adapt old deities to new conditions accounts for Enki, i.e., "the lord of the land," becoming the god of the *apsû* "the deep" surrounding the earth, with a designation E-a as the "god of the watery house"—evidently a description of the god's dwelling-place. The apparent contradiction of a god designated as a "god of the land," who is nevertheless essentially a god of the watery deep, is thus accounted for. Moreover, the thesis here maintained, on the basis of Langdon's text, that Enki is originally a god belonging to a mountain region, is further confirmed by the circumstance that in the oldest Sumerian religious compositions as well as in votive and historical inscriptions we encounter the form Enki, the lord of the "place" or "land," and

<sup>1</sup> In the Akkadian version of the deluge the ship lands on Mt. Nišir (i.e., "Mount Salvation"—evidently become a symbolical name). Berosus (Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, p. 62) no longer knows even this name and speaks vaguely of a "certain mountain"—placed in Armenia. So also the biblical tradition regarding "Mt. Ararat."

<sup>2</sup> Enlil, one of the oldest of Sumerian deities, is a mountain deity, designated as "great mountain," whose temple is *E-kur* "mountain house." The Zikkurat, or staged tower, is the genuine Sumerian sanctuary (in contrast to the Semitic temple which is a "house") and is built in imitation of the mountain house of the Sumerian gods. The fact that the sign *kur* is used for "mountain" and "country" points in the same direction as the home of the Sumerians. See further, Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, I, 2, pp. 406 f.; King, *History of Sumer and Akkad*, p. 54; Rogers, *History of Babylonia and Assyria* (6th ed.), II, 7, n. 1.



not Ea. Indeed long after the transformation of a land deity into a water-god—localized in Eridu at the head of the Persian Gulf, which is probably the oldest of the Sumerian settlements in the Euphrates Valley—the name “Enki” continues in use, though gradually yielding to the designation Ea as the more appropriate.<sup>1</sup>

### III

Now what is said of this holy or “pure” place in which Enki and his consort dwell? It is described (col. I, 14–17) as a place in which “the raven did not croak, the *Dar* bird [rendered ‘kite’ by Langdon] did not shriek, the lion did not kill,<sup>2</sup> the wolf did not seize the lamb, and the dog did not tear.”<sup>3</sup> Langdon interprets this as a description of the peacefulness of a primeval paradise, but in order to maintain this view he is obliged to assume that the word “dog” in l. 17 is also the subject of the verb in the following line which he renders thus:

The mother (goat) as it fed on grain, he (i.e., the dog) disturbed not.<sup>4</sup>

Now it is evident that throughout this passage (col. I, 14–21) the animal named at the beginning of each line (raven, kite, lion, wolf, dog, etc.) is the subject of the verb following. The same must therefore be the case in l. 18, which is therefore to be read:

Animal X<sup>5</sup> did not pick off<sup>6</sup> the fodder.<sup>7</sup>

This line, therefore, suggests that what the author of our text desires to convey is that animals did not carry on the activity associated with

<sup>1</sup> In Sumerian proper names we invariably find Enki, never Ea, whereas in Akkadian names we have Ea, pointing to the later origin of the latter, i.e., after the Sumerians had settled in a region where water was a chief element. See further on this an article by the writer, “Sumerian and Akkadian Views of Beginnings,” *JAOS*, XXXVI, No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The text is clearly *nu-ub-ra-ra*.

<sup>3</sup> The text is *nu-ub-ba*, not *te-ba* as Langdon reads. For *ba*=*našáru* “tear,” see Br. 108. [Langdon’s proposal, in his “Critical Notes” (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 141), to read *zu* at the end of the line instead of *ba* is not warranted by the traces, which point to *ba*. Moreover, his rendering of *zu* as “to know” in an obscene sense would make the line read “The dog did not cohabit with the kid,” which on the face of it is absurd, and particularly so in a description of a supposed paradise, as though outside of paradise dogs satisfied their sexual desires in this abnormal manner. Before proposing such a translation, Langdon should have consulted some zoölogist on the subject.]

<sup>4</sup> [He retains this arbitrary assumption that the subject of l. 17 is also the subject in l. 18 in his “Critical Notes,” *ibid.*, p. 141.]

<sup>5</sup> The sign at the beginning of the line is defective. It looks like *dun* and if in *CT*, XIX, Pl. 45, 8<sup>a</sup>, the equivalent *namušisu* is an animal (a diminutive of *namaššu*?), then that would be the one intended. Some domesticated or gentle creature is designated in contrast to birds of prey and animals of prey in the preceding lines. [Langdon now also (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 140) reads *dun* which he renders *zebu*.]

<sup>6</sup> The text reads as in l. 17, *nu-ub-ba*.

<sup>7</sup> *Še-ku-ku* “grain to be eaten.”

them, the birds of prey did not shriek, the animals of prey did not tear their victims, and the domesticated animals did not graze. Similarly, in ll. 19–21, it is said of other animals (the virgin ewe [? ?], the bird of heaven, and the dove) that they did *not* do something or other.<sup>1</sup> The passage is a poetic way of saying that none of these animals and, therefore, that no land animals at all existed.<sup>2</sup> This interpretation is borne out by ll. 22–23, where it is said that in regard to “eye disease,” one did not say “eye disease,” and in regard to “head disease,” one did not say “head disease.” This does not mean, as Langdon supposes, that people were free from disease, but that there were no people in existence to catch diseases and therefore no incantations to drive them away.<sup>3</sup> According to the Sumerian and Akkadian view, as among all ancient peoples, diseases were personified as demons lying in wait to enter into the bodies of their victims. If there were no people, there would not be any demons, or at all events the demons would be deprived of their natural function. This would again be a poetic way of saying that there were no demons of disease and therefore, of course, no diseases and no incantations to drive them off, but merely because the world was not yet peopled with men and women. Similarly, in ll. 24–25, when it is said,

To one's father, one did not say “father,”<sup>4</sup>  
To one's mother, one did not say “mother,”

Langdon translates *abba* “old man” and *umma* “old woman,” but a glance at Delitzsch's *Sumerisches Glossar* (pp. 4 and 52) under

<sup>1</sup> Ll. 19 and 20 are defective and the verb in l. 21 is not clear to me. At the beginning of l. 19, *nu-mu-un-zu* like *uš-nu-zu = lā pitā* for the “virgin” animal—probably here a kid. [Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 140) now reads *zu* or *su = suq* “increase,” and compares *nu-mu-un-su-ga-mu* (*CT*, XV, Pl. 19, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12), which he translates “my grown-up offspring.” He has apparently forgotten that in his *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, p. 323, he translated the very same signs in the very passages quoted, “rejoices no more.” The latter is correct, as is shown by a bilingual text IV R (2d ed.), Pl. 27, No. 1, 20–21, where the Sumerian phrase in question is translated *la i-ri-šu* “does not rejoice.” See also Zimmern, *Sumerisch-babylonische Tamūzlieder*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> The scene being laid in a mountain, water animals are not referred to, but the implication is that no animal life existed at all.

<sup>3</sup> “Eye disease” and “head disease” are singled out as the two chief classes of demons. To say “eye disease” and “head disease” means to pronounce an incantation, calling upon these disease-demons to leave their victim.

<sup>4</sup> By the side of *ad* and *ama*, *abba* and *umma* are more specifically the designation of parents by their children, while *ad* (“decider”) appears to be the *paterfamilias* and *ama* is the female principle (“mutterleib”), though the distinction between the two pairs of terms is not maintained. Naturally, parents being conventionally regarded as “old,” *abba* and *umma* become also “old man” and “old woman,” but they are by no means restricted to this usage.

these terms shows that they are also used for "father" and "mother." The lines therefore convey again in poetic fashion that neither "father" nor "mother" existed, and that therefore one did not address them as such. Our entire text is couched in poetic form—as Langdon, who calls it an "epic," recognizes<sup>1</sup>—and one must therefore be on the lookout for metaphors and poetical diction. One is reminded of the Sumerian lamentation songs where, in order to contrast the prevailing gloom of disaster with the joy of former days, it is said that formerly in the now devastated city<sup>2</sup>

The wife said<sup>3</sup> to the husband "my husband,"  
 The mother said to her young child "my child."  
 The maid said "my brother,"  
 In the city where the bearing mother said "my child,"  
 The little girl said "my father."

all of which means that formerly the city was full of people—husbands and wives, mothers and children, brothers and sisters, fathers and offspring—but now the place is desolate.

If, therefore—to come back to our text—one does not say "father" or "mother," it means that there were neither parents to be addressed nor children to address them. The earth was empty—there were no animals,<sup>4</sup> no demons, no people. The reason for this is indicated in l. 26, which reads:

In the pure place no water flowed,<sup>5</sup> in the city no water was poured out.<sup>6</sup>

The water meant is, of course, sweet or drinkable water in contrast to the bitter waters of the *apsû* ("the deep"), which is assumed to be in existence as a matter of course. The following four lines (col. I, 27–30) containing the description of the primeval conditions specify

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 5 and 6, where he calls attention also to the colophon *zag-sal* "hymn of praise." This designation is also found at the close of No. 26 in Poebel's *Historical and Grammatical Texts*, Pl. XVII.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Langdon, *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> The same verb *mu-ni-ib-bi* is used as in our text.

<sup>4</sup> Incidentally one may note the order and division of animals into (1) birds of prey, (2) animals of prey, (3) domesticated animals, (4) harmless or tame birds. Fish are not referred to, just as in the second or Yahwistic version of creation (Gen. 2:4b) the creation of fishes is not specified, but only that of land animals.

<sup>5</sup> *Tû=ramdku* (Br. 7155).

<sup>6</sup> *Sig-gi=šapāku* (Br. 4425). Exactly what Langdon had in mind in translating the line, "A pure place where water was not poured for cleansing in the city one inhabited not," it is hard to say.

further activities that are not carried on because there are no persons in the world to carry them on. Four kinds of activities are named: (1) that of the man of the canal, i.e., the boatman or ferryman;<sup>1</sup> (2) that of the "leader" (*nimgir*=*nâgîru*, Meissner, *SAI*, 4942); (3) that of the *nar*—perhaps=*nâru* "musician" (Br. 7274), though *šattammu* (Meissner, *SAI*, 5262) "overseer," is also possible; and (4) *zag*=*ašaredu* (Meissner, *SAI*, 4608) "leader."<sup>2</sup> Tentatively, I would suggest the following rendering for these four lines:

The ferryman did not say "cross"<sup>3</sup>

The leader did not exercise his authority<sup>4</sup>

The musician(?) did not say "come play."<sup>5</sup>

The overseer of the city did not utter lament (?).<sup>6</sup>

With due allowance for uncertainties, so much at least is clear, that the ordinary activities of life were not carried on, and for the reason that there were no persons in the place to carry them on. The canals were not alive with boats to carry freight, there were no officials to carry on the government, there was neither rejoicing nor lamentation.

#### IV

The text now passes on (col. I, 31—II, 11) to an appeal by Ninella to Enki, who is her father, although she is also his consort (col. I, 11, Ninella standing in parallelism with *Dam* "consort" in l. 8),<sup>7</sup> to supply a "city," established by him, with abundance of

<sup>1</sup> *Galû id-da bal-e* (subject of the verb), i.e., "the man who crosses (or takes one across) the canal."

<sup>2</sup> See Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 219 (sub *zag* I). [Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 141) now also reads *zag* here and at the beginning of l. 30. In l. 28 he renders the word "mercy" and in l. 30 "sanctuary"! I cannot find any justification for either rendering. Is it reasonable to suppose that a Sumerian scribe would use the same sign in two lines in such totally different meanings?]

<sup>3</sup> *Mi-ne* (or *de*)—an imperative form. See Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gr.*, § 130e.

<sup>4</sup> I read *zag-ga-na nu-um-ma-si*, i.e., 'did not fill (?) his right hand,' in the sense of exercising authority.

<sup>5</sup> *E-lul-am*, where *e* is the mark of the imperative and *lul+am* is the verb.

<sup>6</sup> *I-dur=kubbû* or *nubbû* "lament" (?) (Br. 4020 and 4021).

<sup>7</sup> This double relationship of Ninella as daughter and consort of Enki arises from the position that Enki once occupied as the head of the pantheon to whom all other gods are traced back. As such he is the "father" of the gods and, therefore, also the father of the first goddess to be produced. He thus produces and marries his own daughter. In col. II, 31, *Damgal-nunna* ("the great supreme mistress") is similarly represented as the daughter of Enki, although we know that *Damgal-nunna* was the name of Enki's consort (e.g., *CT*, XXIV, Pls. 15, 53; 16, 48; 27, 16; 29, 97). On the other hand, we find *Dumuzi* or *Dumuzi-Absu* ("legitimate son of the deep"), represented as both the

water, to change "the bitter waters into sweet waters" (col. II, 4), so that the city may be a gathering-place for people and that the sun and moon may move along their paths with the flowing of the sweet waters.

So that<sup>1</sup> water may flow forth from thy great reservoir(?)<sup>2</sup>,  
 May the city drink water in abundance!  
 May X<sup>3</sup> water in abundance (drink)!  
 May the gathering of bitter water be changed into a gathering  
     of sweet water!  
 May thy city be the house of gathering of the land!  
 May X be the house (of gathering of the land)!<sup>4</sup>  
 To shine, O Babbar,<sup>5</sup> come forth!  
     Stand, O Babbar, in heaven!<sup>5</sup>  
 (Bring) the flow of water as a blessing(?)<sup>6</sup> from its place!  
 . . . . fish, O Nannar,<sup>7</sup> from the water,  
 from the watercourse along the running shore(?),  
 sweet water from below<sup>8</sup> will flow.

<sup>1</sup> *De* at the end of the line (instead of *e-de*, since the preceding word ends in *e*) to indicate purpose. See Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gr.*, § 119).

<sup>2</sup> *Gir*=*tallaktu* "course" (Br. 9193), just as *gir* in l. 9 also has this meaning. Since in the latter passage the combination is followed by the sign for "water," a watercourse is probably intended in both places. In l. 1 *gir* is followed by *ma-an* which appears to qualify the "course." I therefore suggest "reservoir"—a gathering of waters.

<sup>3</sup> The locality above discussed.

<sup>4</sup> Line abbreviated, to be completed according to the preceding one.

<sup>5</sup> The sun-god.

<sup>6</sup> This is a guess, based on the use of *dug* "good," followed by *šar* "growth."

<sup>7</sup> Moon-god.

<sup>8</sup> *Ki-ta* "below," i.e., fed by subterranean sources. My translation of this very difficult line is merely offered as a suggestion, though I feel pretty sure in regard to the latter half of it.

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son and the consort of Ishtar (for example, in *CT*, XV, Pl. 26, 27; also Pl. 20, 21; and Zimmern, "Sumerisch-Babylonische Tamüzlleder," *Berichte der Philol. Histor. Klasse der Kgl. Sächs. Gesell. d. Wiss.*, LIX, 208, 220, 223, and 236; Tamüz addressed by Ishtar as "Oh, my child." Zimmern, *Der Babylonische Gott Tamüz*, p. 26.) This reverts to the view that a goddess is the first figure in the pantheon and therefore the mother "goddess" produces and marries her own son. In Egyptian theology Isis appears to be the mother and wife of Osiris (Lactantius, *Divin. Instit.*, I, 21, and Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, and Osiris*, II, p. 85). In a later systematized Babylonian pantheon in which Anu becomes the theoretical head and therefore "father" of all the gods, the theory was that he was both "father" and "mother." A consort, Antum, to be sure, was assigned to him as a concession to the feeling that there must have been a pair of gods from whom all others are descended, but the opening lines in the great "theological" compilation of the Babylonian-Assyrian pantheon, *CT*, XXIV, show, by making Anu the equivalent of both Anum and Antum (Pl. 1, 1-2), that Anu was the one and only source of all the gods, the producer, therefore, of his own daughter who necessarily becomes his consort, just as—a last trace of this view—Adam gives birth to Eve, who is, therefore, his daughter as well as his wife. The Yahwistic account of the creation of Eve (Gen. 2:21-22) out of one of the

Ll. 12-19, repeating largely ll. 1-7, embody the response of Enki to this appeal, ending with the words "let it be" to indicate Enki's consent.

ribs of Adam is merely a concession to a more sophisticated age that could no longer accept the literal version of Eve being produced directly by Adam, just as among the Greeks the birth of Pallas Athena out of the head of Zeus may be regarded as a modification of an older and more literal tale of Zeus producing, as the source of all life, his own children. On such a supposition we can understand the further detail in Greek mythology that Zeus swallowed his wife Metis ("intelligence") to prevent her giving birth to a son, which shows that Zeus was at an early period supposed to have the power of producing life without the usual form of a union with a goddess. Note the etymology in Gen. 2:23, of *ishsha*, "taken from man," as the trace of the original idea that the first man produces the first woman. Adam and Eve must originally have been conceived by the Hebrews as god and goddess, as is shown by the famous Babylonian cylinder (Jastrow, *Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria*, Pl. 72, Fig. 3), depicting a male and a female sitting in front of the tree of life with a serpent in the background. The two figures have the horned head covering which is the mark of deities. The design on this cylinder is now generally recognized as the prototype of the Adam and Eve story, and it is quite in accord with the transformation which old myths underwent at the hands of later Hebrew compilers to change the gods of a myth into human beings. In the light of views here set forth, the expression used in the P document of man and woman (in the generic sense) being created "in the image of Elohim" acquires a new significance as the substitute for the earlier mythological notion of man being produced by either a male or a female deity.

More common naturally is the view of the female giving birth without the union with the male. So Nānā (meaning "mother") gives birth to Attis without the assistance of the other sex (Frazer, *Adonis*, etc., I, 281 f. See n. 6 on p. 281). She conceives by putting a ripe almond or pomegranate in her bosom. Nānā was called the "motherless virgin," and in her sanctuary at Cyzicus there was a parthenon or virgin's chamber. Among the Egyptians, Neith or Net was similarly a "virgin" mother, the type of parthenogenesis since she as "the great goddess, the mother of all the gods" produced Ra, the Sun, without the help of a male partner (Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, I, 457-62). Later more materialistic thinkers, as a concession to advancing knowledge of the sexual life, admitted at least a male germ as the source of Ra, though still clinging to the idea that Net provided both the substance which was to form the body of Ra and the male germ which fecundated it. Among the Phrygians, Attis became the lover and consort of Nānā, regarded as his mother, and we thus have in the double relationship of mother and son as well as mother and consort another parallel to Ishtar and Dumuzi. Strange as it may seem to us to find people thus reflecting in their myths the notion of life being produced either by the male or the female without the help of the other, if we recall the fact, for which so much evidence has been brought forward (e.g., Frazer, *Adonis*, etc., I, 281 f.; and the same author, *Totemism*, I, 157 f.), that people in a primitive state of culture were ignorant of the process which produced life, the myths become at least intelligible. Even at a comparatively advanced stage people still believed that a woman could be impregnated through the passage of a spirit animal or a spirit fruit into her womb, or by means of a spark (Frazer, *Adonis*, etc., II, 264b), or that she could become pregnant by drinking of a certain stream or by paying reverence to serpents, or that the souls of the dead could pass directly into her womb to be reborn. Such fancies, which, in a modified form, continued well into the Middle Ages, where we encounter all sorts of tales of women being impregnated by demons, vampires, and the like, find their last trace in the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, which, so far from representing an exceptional idea, thus turns out to rest on the ignorance of primitive people as to the processes in the production of life.

It is probably safe to say that in the systematized pantheons of all peoples of antiquity these two motifs may be discerned—the "father" motif which traces all life among gods and men back to a male deity, and the "mother" motif which traces to a goddess the source of all living. The further development of this thesis must be reserved for a separate paper.

## V

There follows what is perhaps the most interesting episode of the tablet—a description of the sexual union between the god Enki and the goddess Nintu (or Nintud), whose name signifies “lady of birth,” followed by the inundation of the fields. The thought underlying this scene evidently is that the creation of streams and canals full of sweet or drinkable water prepares the earth for animal and human life, but in order that such life may flourish, fertilization of the fields through abundant rain is essential. That this should be pictured as following upon the union of a god and goddess is a view for which many parallels among other peoples may be advanced. Before doing so, let me give my rendering of the lines in question which, it will be observed, portray the union of the divine pair in so frank and naïve a manner as of itself to suggest the high antiquity of the composition (ll. 20–32):

The sole possessor of wisdom,<sup>1</sup>  
 To Nintu, the mother of the land,<sup>2</sup>  
 Enki, the possessor of wisdom,<sup>3</sup>  
 To Nintu, (the mother of the land),  
 His member<sup>4</sup> fully<sup>5</sup> he exposed.  
 His member<sup>6</sup> he inserted<sup>7</sup> into the deep womb,<sup>8</sup>  
 His member large (and) erect(?)<sup>9</sup> he would not draw aside.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I.e., Enki.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., the earth goddess—viewed as the depository of the seed of the water-god.

<sup>3</sup> Line again abbreviated—to be completed according to l. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Uš* is the common sign for the male organ and is, in fact, the picture from which the linear form of the sign developed. See Delitzsch, *Ursprung der Keilschriftzeichen*, pp. 92 f., and Barton, *Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing*, I, 175 (illustration), and II, 113.

<sup>5</sup> Read *dirig* = *malû* “full,” etc. (Br. 3739), to be taken in connection with the verb *dun* = *pitû* “open” (Br. 9870), to indicate that he exposed himself in full, with an allusion to the erection, as also in l. 26.

<sup>6</sup> The sign is again *uš* as in ll. 24 and 26. Correct Langdon's text accordingly. By his erroneous reading in l. 25 Langdon missed the key to the understanding of the passage. A comparison of my translation with Langdon's reading of ll. 24–26 is amusing reading.

<sup>7</sup> *Im-im* = *tibû* “sink” (Br. 4825).

<sup>8</sup> *Maš* = *lalu* “splendor” (Meissner, *SAI*, 1175), the designation of the female organ used, e.g. (phonetically written), in the Gilgamesh Epic in the scene between Enkidu and the woman (Tablet I, col. IV, 22), “after he had satiated himself with her *lalu* for six days and seven nights.”

<sup>9</sup> The two signs are *maš* “large” and *dug* “good,” but also used as a euphemistic expression for the sexual act, hence (1) *e-dug-ga* “joyful place,” as a synonym of sleeping-chamber, and (2) *dug* = *rišû* “to produce.” See Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> *Bar-šu* = *ina aḫāti* (Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 65, and the example, p. 106, under *gub*), in connection with the verb *ša-ba-ra-an-zi-zi*, to be decomposed into *ša* = *lû* “indeed” (Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gr.*, § 98), *bara* the sign for the negative, *an* = verbal prefix and *zi-zi* = *nasûhu* “draw out” (Br. 2323). For another example of *Bar* “aside” with *Zi*, see Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 224, under *Zig*.

She cried, "To me no man has ever come."  
 Enki cried,  
 By the spirit of heaven, he swore;  
 "Lie with me, lie with me," was his word.  
 Enki, the father<sup>1</sup> of Damgalnunna, uttered his word.  
 The fields through Ninbarsag were inundated.

The result of the union is the inundation of the fields with resultant fertility. What Langdon took for a deluge of nine months' duration is merely the poetical description of the rainy season that follows upon the union of Enki and Nintu. There is thus expressed the symbolical parallel between the god pouring his "water" into the "ground" of the goddess and thus fructifying her, and the earth receiving water as a means of fertilization. The text continues (ll. 33-42):

The fields received the water of Enki.<sup>2</sup>  
 It was one day—its first month.  
 It was a second day—its second month.  
 It was a third day—its third month.  
 It was a fourth day—its fourth month.  
 It was a fifth day<sup>3</sup>—(its fifth month).  
 It was a sixth day—(its sixth month).  
 It was a seventh day—(its seventh month).  
 It was an eighth day—(its eighth month).  
 It was a ninth day—its ninth month, the month of  
 fertility (?) through the water.<sup>4</sup>

It is manifestly unwarranted to read into these lines that the rain continued for nine months. That would have been expressed as in the Babylonian deluge story.<sup>5</sup> All that might properly be concluded from a literal construction of the lines is that there was rain for one day each month. This, however, would be too wooden. Since the entire language of the text is poetical, we are justified in

<sup>1</sup> [Instead of a "father" Langdon now (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 141) wants to read *za* "by the side of." The original has clearly *a*, and, besides, the preposition would be after the name of the goddess.]

<sup>2</sup> Enki is the "seed" of the god poured into the earth.

<sup>3</sup> This abbreviated line and the three following lines, likewise abbreviated (sixth day, seventh day, eighth day), are to be completed according to the model of the preceding four lines, which are written out in full.

<sup>4</sup> The ninth month is designated as *nam-sal-a-ka*. The sign *sal* is the common one for the "female organ," *nam* is the formative for abstract nouns, so that *nam-sal* with *a* (*ka* being the genitive) suggests some such idea as "water marriage" or fertility through water, to designate the completion of the process of the fertilization of the earth through Enki's seed.

<sup>5</sup> Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet XI, 128.



interpreting the passage as conveying the thought that it rained first on the first month, it rained again in the second month, it rained for a third time in the third month, etc., to indicate that the *rainy season* extended over nine months before the process of fertilizing the earth through the rain was complete;<sup>1</sup> and I venture to suggest that the passage also implies a parallel between the nine months of pregnancy and the process of fertilization until the fruit is ripe. In fact, since the text does not actually say that it rained one day in each of nine months, the entire passage appears to be a somewhat poetical manner of suggesting the monthly growth of the seed through repeated rains during the period of "gestation"—a steady renewal of the seed as it were. Apart from everything else, the circumstance that this passage is twice repeated, namely, col. III, 13-20 and ll. 33-38, and in connection *with an entirely different incident*, is sufficient to show that no flood destructive of mankind and the earth can be intended. Otherwise, we should have to assume three deluges. Furthermore, the "boat" on which, according to Langdon, the survivor of the flood escapes is *not* mentioned in our passage at all, but only in the case of the two repetitions (ll. 10 and 30). When we come to these repetitions it will be shown that the boat is the one in which the god Enki sails, and that there is not the slightest reference to any human being escaping from any catastrophe on this boat. Furthermore, the mysterious Tagtug (as Langdon reads), the supposed survivor of the deluge is *not mentioned at all until after* the third occurrence of the passage in question, and to clinch the matter Tagtug, when he is mentioned, is designated as a god and not as a man. That our passage is intended to describe the process of fertilization with the resultant rich and abundant vegetation is clearly shown by the lines that follow (ll. 43-46) with which col. II closes:

Like, like fat, like good [i.e., rich] cream,<sup>2</sup>  
 [Nintu], the mother of the land,  
 [Nintu, the mother of the land]  
 Gave birth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that it does rain, though of course not continuously, during nine months in the Euphrates Valley, whereas three months, June, July, and August, are the "rainless ones" (Willcocks, *Irrigation in Mesopotamia*, p. 5).

<sup>2</sup> Not "tallow," as Langdon proposes, who sees in these lines (p. 6) that "man dissolved in the waters like tallow and fat"! Where is there any mention of mankind in the passage? And do fat and tallow dissolve in water? That is just what they do not do.

<sup>3</sup> The verb is *in-tu-ud*, the same as in the name of the goddess Nintu or Nintud.

The fat and rich cream, like the biblical phrase "milk and honey," are appropriate metaphors to suggest the plentiful products that follow upon the fertilization of the soil; and it is Nintu, "the goddess of birth," who brings forth the fruits of the earth.

The frankness with which the scene between the god and goddess is described<sup>1</sup> of itself suggests its symbolical character as the union of the divine pair to bring about fertility on earth. How widespread the belief in this phase of sympathetic or imitative magic is among primitive peoples and the many rites—surviving to a late day as popular customs—it gave rise to in all parts of the world may be seen from the examples brought together with his usual skill and marvellous learning by Sir J. G. Frazer.<sup>2</sup> At the basis of customs, dramatically representing the union of a woman with a symbol of a god or with his human representative, lies the idea that the fertility of the fields is the result of a marriage between a god and a goddess. At times it is the marriage of the sun with the moon, as with the Indians of Peru (Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 146), or the sun with the earth, as among the Oraons of Bengal (p. 148), or it is a marriage among trees or shrubs—oaks and vines—representing the divine pair. Such beliefs and customs, so widely prevalent and appearing under a variety of forms, of a symbolical marriage between a god and goddess representing the male and female principle as a means of promoting vegetation all fall within the category of the scene described in our tablet. Thus in several of the groups of islands between the western end of New Guinea and Australia,<sup>3</sup> the heathen population believes that Upu-lera—the sun—as the male principle at the beginning of the rainy season comes down into a holy fig tree to fertilize the earth. Upu-lera is symbolized by a lamp, inside of cocoa-nut leaves, which is hung on the sacred fig tree. To facilitate the descent of the sun, a ladder with seven rungs is placed at his disposal. Pigs and dogs are

<sup>1</sup> Compare the story of Enkidu and the harlot incident in the Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet I, col. IV, where every detail of the act is set forth, even more unreservedly than in our passage, the removal of clothes, the exposing of the person, and the sexual act itself. In this episode of the Gilgamesh Epic the union of the god and goddess is transferred to a human pair with, however, the same underlying symbolism of suggesting that fertilization of the female by the male is the starting-point of things in general and of human life in particular.

<sup>2</sup> *The Magic Art*, II, chap. xi, "The Influence of the Sexes on Vegetation," and chap. xii, § 2, "The Marriage of the Gods."

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, II, 98 f.

sacrificed in profusion on a large flat stone under the fig tree, serving as a sacrificial table. "Men and women indulge in saturnalia, and the mystic union of the sun and earth is dramatically represented in public amid song and dances by the real union of the sexes under the tree." The object of the festival is to produce plenty of food and drink, cattle and children, for Upu-lera. Among the Greeks we find the supposed marriage of a god and goddess as the symbol and the source of fertility on earth giving rise to a large variety of customs in which the part of the god is taken either by a hierophant or by an image, and the part of the goddess by a priestess or by a virgin or by a queen. At times the parts of both god and goddess are enacted by human beings regarded as king and queen. So the people of Plataea celebrated a festival every few years which they called the little Daedala.<sup>1</sup> An oak was cut down, made into an image, dressed as a bride, and carried about in procession. At Athens on the twelfth day of a month corresponding to our February<sup>2</sup> the sun-god Dionysus was annually married to the Queen<sup>3</sup> to insure the fertility of the vine and other fruit trees of which Dionysus was the patron. At the Eleusian Mysteries in the month of September, the union of the sky-god Zeus with the corn-goddess Demeter was symbolized by a union between a hierophant and the priestess of Demeter. The pair acted the part of god and goddess, though the union was purely symbolical, since the hierophant had temporarily deprived himself of his virility by an application of hemlock.<sup>4</sup> The pair retired into a murky place, while the worshipers waited for the result, which was exhibited to them in the form of an ear of corn—the fruit of the divine marriage. The revelation of the reaped corn was the crowning act of the mysteries.

In Egypt<sup>5</sup> we come across ceremonies that bear a close resemblance to what Herodotus describes as taking place in connection with the cult of Marduk in Babylon. So at Thebes a woman slept in the temple of Ammon as the consort of the god, and usually this divine consort was the queen of Egypt herself. The doctrine of the divine descent of kings appears to have been taken more literally in

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, II, 140. The great Daedala was celebrated once in sixty years.

<sup>2</sup> Anthesterion.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, II, 136.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 130 f., and the references there given.

Egypt than elsewhere. The kings were not deified at death, but were regarded as produced by the god Ammon, who assumed the guise of the reigning king and in that disguise had intercourse with the queen and produced the heir to the throne. The divine procreation is represented in unmistakable form on the walls of two of the oldest temples—those at Deir el-Bahari and at Luxor. The god himself approaches the queen's bed-chamber and there assumes the guise of the human spouse, and the fertilization takes place. Maspero and others are of the opinion that the representations on the walls of Egyptian temples illustrate a real drama enacted by a man and woman when a queen was brought to bed. In the Roman period the custom had degenerated, and a maiden of one of the noblest houses was appointed to serve Amon as his concubine. The primitive character of such beliefs in the marriage of gods and goddesses is furthermore attested by the popular customs throughout Europe of May-Day celebrations and at Whitsuntide, for the King and Queen of May, or the Lord and Lady of May, always symbolize in some form such divine marriages, enacted at the time of the awakening of nature or of the bloom of nature to insure the hoped-for vegetation and fertility. The boy and the girl selected as king and queen generally represent the god and goddess of the woods—the oak-god and the oak-goddess or some other tree deities. Both are, therefore, decked out as trees with leaves and boughs; and the familiar celebrations, such as carrying the Maypole in procession or dancing around the Maypole, are merely variations of the marriage festivities marking the union of the god and goddess in the spring or at the approach of summer to insure a successful yield of the fields and the orchards. It is significant that in most cases the girl chosen as the queen or lady must be a virgin—as Nintu is a virgin protesting that no man has “come” unto her.<sup>1</sup> The numerous customs—enumerated by Frazer and found in all parts of the world—which deal with real or imitative unions between boys and girls as between husbands and wives at the spring season or on the approach of the rainy season—according to climatic conditions—are further extensions of the same idea. So in some parts of Java at the season of the

<sup>1</sup> Langdon wants to see in this perfectly clear utterance the reason for the coming of the deluge, the utterance implying, according to Langdon, that men failed to show the proper respect for Enki, in whose mouth he erroneously places these words. The phrase is precisely the same as the one used in Hebrew for the sexual act.

approaching bloom on the rice, the husbandman and his wife visit their fields at night and there engage in sexual intercourse for the purpose of promoting the growth of the crops.<sup>1</sup> Among the Indians of Peru a festival was celebrated at the season of the ripening of the alligator pears, during which men and boys ran about among the orchards stark naked, privileged to violate any woman whom they met. The festival was preceded frequently by a fast of five days—the shroving by the shriving<sup>2</sup>—during which sexual intercourse was prohibited.

Among the Pipiles of Central America, similarly, after a period of enforced restraint just before the seed was committed to the earth, the sexual union was enjoined upon the people the night before planting “as a religious duty in default of which it was not lawful to sow the seed.”<sup>3</sup> Incidentally, attention may also be directed to the contrary customs—restraint from sexual intercourse as a penance in the hope of arousing the pity or favor of the spirits of the fields or of the deities to bring about a rich crop—and from this it is only a step to the belief, vouched for similarly by widely prevalent tales of sexual immorality, of adultery and incest as causes for the failure of crops through the aroused anger of the spirit and the gods.

Coming back to our tablet, the scene of the union between the god and the goddess sheds a new light on the well-known account given by Herodotus (Book I, § 181) of the sacred room at the top of the zikkurat or stage-tower of the god Marduk at Babylon, where there was a richly adorned couch occupied by a woman “chosen for himself by the deity out of all the women in the land” and by the god who “comes down in person into this chamber and sleeps upon the couch.” Herodotus naïvely adds that he does not credit the tale, but the meaning of it is perfectly clear. The god—in this case Marduk—was no doubt represented by a priest, while the woman, who had to be a virgin, represented the goddess. Marduk’s festival is the New Year’s tide,<sup>4</sup> celebrated in the spring of the year, and in the light of the passage in our tablet it is a reasonable inference that the marriage of Marduk and his consort Zarpanit was symbolically

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, II, 98.

<sup>2</sup> See Haupt, “Purim” (*BA*, VI, 2, p. 1).

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, II, 98.

<sup>4</sup> Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 678 f.

represented at the time of the vernal equinox by the deflowering of a virgin through a priest, so as to insure the fertility of the fields. We are fortunate in having some further distinct references to marriages among the gods, the most significant of which is the description in several of Gudea's inscriptions<sup>1</sup> of the "wedding gifts" presented by him to Ningirsu, the patron deity of Shirpurla, the capital of Gudea's kingdom, and to the god's "beloved wife," Bau. These gifts were offered on the New Year's festival (Zag-Muk) celebrated in honor of Bau. When upon the consolidation of the Euphratean states into the Babylonian empire by Hammurapi (*ca.* 2000 B.C.), Babylon, the city of Marduk, became the capital, the headship of the pantheon was transferred to Marduk and the New Year's festival became his festival and that of his consort.

A letter to an Assyrian King<sup>2</sup> sets forth in detail the ceremonies incident to the dedication of a couch for the god Nabu who, it is said, "enters the bedchamber" on the third day of the month of Aru (*i.e.*, the second month, the year beginning always with Nisan, sacred to Marduk), which presumably, therefore, was the festival of Nabu on which the nuptials with his consort Tashmit were celebrated. In another text<sup>3</sup> the consecration of such a couch prepared for a god is likewise set forth in detail, and it is especially interesting to note that the attendant functionary is described as the "bride"—evidently a priestess—selected as the chosen of the god and, as the term indicates, a virgin. She washes the feet of the god with sweet-smelling reeds and fine oil, comes to(?)<sup>4</sup> the couch three times, kisses the feet of the god, then "goes and sits down." There can be little doubt from this description that the union of the god with his "bride" is symbolically represented here; and again it is significant that the rite occurs in the spring of the year.<sup>5</sup>

Down to the latest days the votary was regarded as the bride of the god, the latter being represented as betrothed to the priestess. So

<sup>1</sup> Thureau-Dangin, *Sumerisch-akkadische Königsinschriften*, Statue G, cols. II-IV (p. 84); also Statue E, cols. V-VII (p. 80), and D, col. II, 13-III, 1 (p. 77).

<sup>2</sup> Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*, No. 65. See Johnston, *Assyrian Epistolary Literature*, p. 154, and Frazer, *Magic Art*, II, 130.

<sup>3</sup> K 164, translated by S. A. Strong, in *BA*, II, 635.

<sup>4</sup> The verb is *ta-rib-bi-a* (obv. 5) and *ta-rib-bi* (obv. 30) from *erēbu* "enter."

<sup>5</sup> Nebo is the son of Marduk, and therefore his festival is celebrated in the second month, while that of father Marduk is in the first month—the vernal equinox.

in a most interesting inscription of Nabonidos, the last king of Babylonia (555-539 B.C.),<sup>1</sup> the king tells us of dedicating his own daughter to the service of the moon-god Nannar or Sin in his temple at Ur, after the moon-god, who had indicated his displeasure, had through omens showed that he "desired" the virgin princess. The term used in describing this dedication<sup>2</sup> is the one which is used for the "betrothal" in the corresponding Hebrew form,<sup>3</sup> and in the Babylonian is a synonym for "husband."<sup>4</sup>

This part of our tablet may, therefore, be taken as an index of the way in which the Sumerians viewed the beginnings of things. In common with all primitive peoples, they do not conceive of a time when nothing existed—a *creatio ex nihilo*—but assume the world to be in existence, though without life. The earth is there and the waters, the mountains, and even cities, but there is no life. Fertilization must take place in order to bring forth life—life in the fields, life in the animal world, the life of mankind. All three forms of life are placed on the same level; and since life comes from the gods, a god and a goddess are represented as uniting to produce life. In our tablet it is Enki, the "lord of earth," as the two elements, composing his name indicate, and Nintu, the mother-goddess,<sup>5</sup> who unite; and it is merely a modification of this view to substitute for Enki the sky-god, in whose domain are the waters that come from above, as the male principle with the earth as the female principle, or vice versa, as in one form of the Egyptian cosmogony where Seb (or Keb) the earth-god and Nut the sky-goddess lie in close embrace till Shu, the god of light, forces himself between the two and separates them.<sup>6</sup>

These examples will suffice to show the currency of the view among Sumerians and Babylonians of the marriage of the gods to bring about the fertility of the soil; and it is interesting as well

<sup>1</sup> Clay, *Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts*, I, No. 45. A similar text is published by Dhorme, "La Fille de Nabonide," *Revue d'Assyriologie*, XI, 105-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Erēšu*. Nannar is called the *irišu* of the votary, i.e., the one who "desires" the votary in marriage.

<sup>3</sup> *Aras*.

<sup>4</sup> *Erišu* = *hā'iru* "husband" or "bridegroom" (II R, Pl. 36, 39c-d).

<sup>5</sup> Enki and Nintu also produce the gods; hence the epithet, "Mother of the gods," given to Nintu, e.g., Gudea, Statue A, col. III, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Budge, *Gods of the Egyptians*, II, 90, 97 f., 100, 105.

as important to find this view carried back in our tablet to the beginning of things as the manner in which the earth was made habitable for men and animals through the plentiful irrigation of the fields from the "seed" of the god Enki.

## VI

I confess that the next episode in the text, covering col. III to l. 38, is not yet clear to me. It contains, as already indicated, two further descriptions of the inundations of the fields that are exact duplicates of the description at the close of col. II,<sup>1</sup> except that the description is abbreviated<sup>2</sup> in the two passages in col. III. The two passages in col. III, (1) ll. 1-20, and (2) ll. 21-38 are almost exact parallels except for (a) an addition at the end of ll. 27 and 28 and (b) the substitution of Ninkurra in ll. 21, 25, 28, and 38 for Nin-šar in ll. 1, 5, 8, and 20. Since the habitation of Enki is described as a "mountain," Nin-kur-ra, "lady of the mountain," would be appropriate for the consort of Enki, particularly since Enki himself appears as a Nin-kur, "lord of the mountain."<sup>3</sup> Nin-šar, "lady of the green," is evidently a goddess of vegetation, and in the long theological list of gods<sup>4</sup> is made the equivalent of goddess in general, i.e., an Ishtar—as the earth-goddess. In the episode in which Ninšar and Ninkurra are introduced, there is no reference to a mountain as the dwelling of Enki. Instead, we have at the beginning of the episode

<sup>1</sup> Cf. col. II, 33-46 with col. III, 13-20 and 33-38.

<sup>2</sup> In col. III, 13-20, merely the first day of the first month, the second day of the second month, and the ninth day of the ninth month are named, and in ll. 34-38 only the first day of the first month and the ninth day of the ninth month. No doubt in both cases the full list of months as in col. II is intended. In col. III the second sign in the name of the goddess differs from that occurring in col. II, ll. 21-23, and 44, so much so that one is impelled to read in the case of col. III Nin-šar (*CT*, XXIV, Pl. 1, 28=Pl. 20, 19), and not Nintu. A comparison with Barton's lists (*Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing*), Nos. 57 and 170, shows that *tu* and *šar*, though resembling one another in the first part of the sign, yet are distinct, and despite the temptation to read "Nintu" also in col. III, it is evident that a different goddess is intended, or at all events a different epithet. In l. 40 of col. III, but in a new episode, we again find the same form for *tu* as in col. II.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., V R 61, col. IV, 17; cf. II R 58, No. 6, 68—Ea as the guardian of the precious stones in the mountains. Our text in which Enki dwells in a "mountain" suggests the connection between the two aspects of Enki-Ea (1) as god of the deep and (2) as god of metal and stone work, the source of which is in the mountains. See further below. Quite another Nin-kur ("lady of the mountain") occurs in the long list, *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 4, 11=Pl. 21, 14, the consort of En-kur ("lord of the mountain"), belonging to the Enlil group.

<sup>4</sup> *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 20, 19=Pl. 1, 28, with gloss *ša-ar*, as the readings of the second element.



and in both variations a mention of a river bank (col. III, 1 and 21—to be supplied as a parallel line to l. 1) and of a boat (col. III, 10 and 30) on which the god sets foot. We may be permitted to conclude from these indications that the god Enki in col. III is here viewed as the god of the waters or of the deep; in other words he has become Ea. Our text therefore regards Enki in the first episode as the old land- or mountain-god, and in the second episode as the god of the waters. Coming now to the episode itself, we find it said first of Ninšar (l. 1) and then of Ninkurra (l. 21),

At the bank of the river (she) speaks.

The goddess apparently addresses the river as the element of Enki or Ea. The following line (l. 2=l. 22) containing the words “Enki” (as subject) followed by *zūk-ra*,<sup>1</sup> which has the force of “meadow” or “marsh” or spirit, and then the verb *im-da-lal-e-de* twice is not at all clear. To translate as Langdon does, “They are reckoned,” gives no sense. According to *CT*, XVII, Pl. 28, 22–23, *da-lal*=*kullumu* “show” or “reveal.” Although Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 168, regards this Akkadian translation as unsatisfactory, yet it is hazardous to reject it barring good evidence to the contrary. Since one of the meanings of *zūk* is *šušû* “marsh” (Br. 10309), and at the beginning of the Akkadian creation story (Tablet I, 6)<sup>2</sup> we read,

*gipara la kiššura šušû lâ še'i,*  
No field was marked off, no marsh seen.

the combination of *zūk* with a verb *da-lal* in the sense of “show” and “reveal” is both intelligible and reasonable. If now we take *e-de* as an affirmative (Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gr.*, § 119) to the verbal form to indicate a purpose, we could translate ll. 2 and 3 (=22–23):

Enki that the meadow might appear, might appear,  
Called to his messenger *Usmû*.<sup>3</sup>

The following two lines (4–5=24–25) contain the message to *Usmû*. I propose to render them as follows:

<sup>1</sup> The sign is, according to Dr. Chiera's practiced eye, *zūk* (Br. 10300), and not *ma*, as Langdon reads. I confess to a lingering doubt of Dr. Chiera's view, as long as the line cannot be satisfactorily rendered.

<sup>2</sup> King, *Seven Tablets of Creation*, I, 2.

<sup>3</sup> The god *kur-igi-gunnu-nun-me*=*Isimu* or *Usmû* (*CT*, XXIV, Pl. 16, 44=Pl. 29, 94), specifically designated as the “*sukkallu* of Enki” just as in our text. See also the passages quoted by Zimmern, *Sumerische Busspsalmen*, p. 49.

The son of man<sup>1</sup> to become pure<sup>2</sup> has not (yet) been cleansed.<sup>3</sup>  
 Nin-šar to become pure has not (yet) been cleansed.

If this rendering upon which the interpretation of the entire episode hinges is correct, then we may see in the address of Nin-šar and of Ninkurra an appeal addressed to Enki to accept or carry out the purification of herself and of the "son of man," whom we are perhaps to look upon as the offspring of such a union as is described in col. II. In other words, the episode rests upon the widespread belief that the first man is the offspring of the gods, and that it embodies the rite of purification to be performed for the divine mother and her child after birth, introduced here as a further symbol of the personification of nature to insure fertility. The custom of purification of mother and child after birth is so common among people in an early state of culture and indeed so universal, and is thence carried over into advancing and advanced culture,<sup>4</sup> that one need not be surprised to find it among the Sumerians. Indeed, one should expect it a priori, as well as the view that the mother who has given birth was regarded as unclean till the purification rite was performed. Transferring the symbolism to the beginnings of things, the episode joins on naturally to the symbolism in col. II of the sexual union of the god and goddess to produce the inundation of the fields. Corresponding to the "fertility" of the fields,<sup>5</sup> as a result of the earth (or the fields) receiving the rain as the seed of Enki, so in order to perfect the process of fertility the "purification" rite after birth is introduced as a symbol to suggest the covering of the fields with verdure after the inundation.<sup>6</sup>

The episode would thus represent the same process of nature as is assumed in the picture of the union of the god and goddess—the rainy season as the condition of life on this earth and to bring about fertility in the fields and the birth also of mankind—the same process,

<sup>1</sup> *Galu-dumu*, the equivalent of the Hebrew *bar enoš* (as used by Ezekiel), for which the German has the expressive phrase "Menschensohn."

<sup>2</sup> *Šag-ga-e-de*, i.e., *šag*=*damku* "pure, clear," etc. (Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 255), with *e-de* "so that" (Latin *ut*) as above with *im-da-lal*.

<sup>3</sup> The verb at the end of the line is *mu-un-su-ub-bi*. For *su-ub*="cleanse," see Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 248. Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 141) now reads as I do.

<sup>4</sup> See the many examples of various forms of such purifications, including the immersion in water collected by Ploss-Bartels, *Das Weib* (9th ed., Leipzig, 1908), II, 451-55, which can be further multiplied.

<sup>5</sup> "Like fat, like fat, like rich cream, Nintu gave birth." See above, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> Hence again the refrain "like fat, like fat, like rich cream," col. III, ll. 18 and 37.

but with the drenching of the fields as the symbol of a "purification" rite, based on the purification of the birth-giving mother and her offspring. Let us see whether this interpretation, tentatively suggested, will endure the test. If ll. 2-5 = 21-25, which we have so far considered, represent an address of Ninšar and of Ninkurra, respectively, to the river, recalling that Enki had asked his messenger Usmû to undertake the purification of Ninšar (or Ninkurra) and of the son of man so as to cleanse them, the following ll. 6-11 = 26-32 would represent either Usmû's response or the continuation of Ninšar's or Ninkurra's address, describing how, in response to Enki's request—repeated in the true epic style of reiteration—the fields were inundated and how, after the symbolical "purification," the soil yielded rich returns. The text reads (ll. 6-8):

His messenger Usmû returned to him:<sup>1</sup>

The son of man to become pure has not (yet) been cleansed.

Ninšar to become pure has not (yet) been cleansed.

whereas in the second passage the negative particle *nu* is absent and in its place we find *su-ub-bu ma-ni*.<sup>2</sup> The affix *ma-ni* is puzzling. The context suggests some such force as "has been cleansed." Then follows the passage, ll. 9-12 = ll. 29-31, in which Langdon sees the reference to the survivor of the deluge taking refuge on a boat. When he first made the suggestion, he took the word *lugal-mu* "my king" at the beginning of l. 9 = l. 29 to refer to the survivor, whom he identified with his Tagtug, although *this name does not appear in the tablet till l. 39 of col. III*, i.e., after the supposed deluge (twice recounted) had passed. The theory loses what force it had by Langdon's change of view (*Expository Times*, January, 1916, p. 167,

<sup>1</sup> I.e., returned answer to Enki.

<sup>2</sup> Ll. 27-28. [Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 141) now also reads the signs as I do and renders them,

This pious son of man whom he has declared pure.

O Ninkurra, this pious son of man whom he has declared pure.

This is again an illustration of Langdon's curious method of supplying words that do not exist in the text, for there is no "pious son of man" in l. 28 at all, but at most the word "pious," though this is an erroneous translation. This, therefore, disposes of the view which makes l. 28 an address to Ninkurra. Of both Ninkurra and of the "son of man" the same thing is said.

The son of man to be purified has now been cleansed

Ninkurra to be purified has now been cleansed,

corresponding, therefore, to ll. 3-4 = 7-8 ("Nin-šar" and "the son of man") and ll. 24-25 (Nin-kurra and "the son of man"). *Šag-ga-e-de* in all six instances, as well as ll. 27-28, cannot be an epithet of "son of man," but indicates that he is to be purified or sanctified.]

nn. 7 and 9) that "my king" here and wherever it occurs refers to the god Enki. This is undoubtedly right and represents the conclusion to which I had come independently, many weeks before the *Expository Times* for January, 1916, reached me. In order, however, to save his theory, Langdon now translates l. 10=line

(My king) alone upon the boat awaited him,

i.e., Enki awaited Tagtug. There is no infix in the verb *be-in-gub* or *ne-in-gub* corresponding to "him," which Langdon has thus added without warrant so far as I can see. Moreover, is it likely that, if Enki awaited someone, the author of our text would have emphasized the fact that Enki was "alone"; and again is it at all likely that a human survivor of the flood who is not mentioned till thirty lines later should be referred to by a pronominal suffix? Why not mention his name? and how could the author expect any reader to guess who "him" is, if he had actually introduced an infix in the verb? Langdon's earlier rendering,

His foot alone upon the boat set,

was nearer the correct rendering. The combination of "foot" with the verb *gub* "place," I take in the sense of "make for," "proceed," and taking "my king" of the previous line as the subject, we obtain the very reasonable statement,

(My king) made for the boat forthwith.<sup>1</sup>

Following upon *lugal-mu* in l. 9=l. 29, we have a puzzling expression:

*Im* (or *ni*)-*dirig-gari im-dirig-gari*.

Langdon has made three propositions:

- a) O my king, the deluge sweeps away, yea the deluge sweeps away. [*PSBA*, 1914, p. 188]
- b) My king who was filled with fear, yea, was filled with fear. [*Sumerian Epic*, etc., p. 76]
- c) My king who is clothed in the fulness of awe, who is clothed in the fulness of awe. [*Expository Times*, January, 1916, p. 167]

So much seems clear, that the two terms *im-dirig* and *ri* are descriptive either of the "king," i.e., of the god Enki, or of the conditions under which he makes for the boat. *Im-dirig* has commonly the

<sup>1</sup> *Aš-a* "one," with the affix giving it the force of "at once." *Aš-ni*, like col. I, ll. 7 and 10 would be "alone," literally "his one."

force of "cloud" (Br. 8413) while *ri*=*ziku* "storm" (Br. 2582).<sup>1</sup> The combination would therefore point to a storm of some kind, the repetition emphasizing its severity. Tentatively, therefore, I suggest, My king, the storm bearer, the storm bearer, makes forthwith for the boat. The boat is that of Enki, to which, as to the boats of other gods, there are frequent references in Babylonian-Assyrian literature.<sup>2</sup>

In the next line a correction to Langdon's reading based on a collation of the tablet enables us to catch at least the general meaning. Instead of the meaningless *maškim* which Langdon renders "watchman," the text furnishes the sign for 2/3 followed by *Rim*=*tibû* "sink" (Br. 4825-4826). The verb at the end of the line is *gin*=*alâku* "go" (Br. 4871). A rendering that "the boat sank two-thirds of its bulk and moved" would be an almost perfect parallel to l. 80 of Tablet XI of the Gilgamesh Epic, where it is said of the ship which Utnapishtim built at the instance of Ea that it moved with 2/3 of its bulk in the water.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately the beginning of the line reading, apparently, 2 *gu-ma*<sup>4</sup> (though *kam-ma* is also possible), is quite obscure. Langdon's rendering of "two humbles," which he himself admits is "wholly uncertain," may be dismissed as giving no sense. Is perhaps some part of the ship meant? The next line (12=32) I render

He closed the opening,<sup>5</sup> with fire he purified.

The description in these lines refers apparently to the purification rite undertaken by Enki in his ship, after which we have the passage, ll. 13-20=33-38, of Enki inundating the fields, ending with Ninšar in the first passage, Ninkurra in the second, bringing forth "like fat, like fat, like rich cream,"<sup>6</sup> i.e., abundantly. Now while duly recog-

<sup>1</sup> IV R<sup>2</sup> 5, 35 = CT, XVI, Pl. 19 (*im-ri*), whereas in the same text l. 33, *im-dirig*.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., the list of boats of various gods in the syllabary K 4378, col. V, including (l. 28), "the boat of Ea" (Delitzsch, *Assyr. Lesestücke* [3d ed.], p. 88); and CT, XXIV, Pl. 30, 117, where the boatman of Ea is mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> So Haupt's explanation of the line which he restores as follows: [*elippu il-*] *li-ku* *ki-ni-pat-su* (*American Journal of Philology*, IX, 423).

<sup>4</sup> Also col. IV, 22, in a different context.

<sup>5</sup> *Gab*=*pitû* (Br. 4490), lit. "opening" and *tab*=*edlû* "lock," "close" (Meissner, *SAI*, 2447). Cf. Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet XI, 94, *ap-ti-ši ba-a-bi* "I closed my gate" (or "door").

<sup>6</sup> L. 19 we must read *Nin-šar, ia-lum*—not *Nin-kur-ra*. At the end of l. 38 we must assume *in-tu-ud* "brought forth."

nizing the uncertainties in the interpretation of this episode, it involves, unless I have gone entirely wrong, a "purification" rite or symbol, followed or accompanied by an inundation of the fields. The repetition of the episode, with the interchange between Ninšar and Ninkurra, suggests the use of the text as part of an incantation-rite where such repetitions are characteristic. The circumstance that our text closes with an invocation to a number of deities<sup>1</sup> points in this direction, just as a Sumerian version of creation<sup>2</sup> closes with such an invocation and is described as a *Šiptu* "incantation." We would thus have in the two episodes (1) the union of the god with the goddess and (2) the "purification" of the goddess and of "the son man," rites connected with the Sumerian view of the beginnings of things that are introduced as appropriate to the Ea incantation ritual—the *Nam-sub Nun-ki* "Incantation of Eridu," so often referred to in the incantation texts,<sup>3</sup> in which water as a purification element played the prominent part. The reference to primitive myths is characteristic of these incantation rituals. So to confine ourselves to the Eridu or "water" ritual, we read in one text<sup>4</sup> that the sick man should be sprinkled with water taken from the "confluence of the streams"—the holy place to which, at the close of the flood, the favorite of Ea, Utnapishtim, is taken (Tablet X, 204–5).<sup>5</sup> Again we find an enumeration of the "father-mother" gods of the pantheon,<sup>6</sup> evidently taken from some list that set forth the order of the gods in their creation.<sup>7</sup> In connection with an incantation against toothache<sup>8</sup> there is a brief recital of the order of creation, heaven, earth, rivers, canals, and marshes, taken from or based upon a creation myth. In omen texts we likewise find extracts from myths as a basis for the omens. So the great *Anu-Enlil* series of astrological

<sup>1</sup> Col. VI, 43–50. See below, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *CT*, XV, Pls. 35–38.

<sup>3</sup> See Jastrow, *Religion Babylonians und Assyriens*, I, 295 f. and 353; cf. *CT*, XVII, Pls. 11, 81, 90; 12, 32; 15, 23.

<sup>4</sup> *CT*, XVII, Pl. 26, 65 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Ina pī narāti*. See above, p. 104.

<sup>6</sup> *CT*, XVI, Pl. 13, Col. II, 11–32, forming a tablet of the *Utukki limnūti* series, in which Ea and water play the chief rôles.

<sup>7</sup> *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 1 and parallels.

<sup>8</sup> *CT*, XVII, Pl. 50.

omens begins with a cosmological myth<sup>1</sup> of the position assigned by the gods to the moon at the beginning of things.<sup>2</sup>

Viewing our text in this light, we need not expect to find an exact order of creation, but merely the stringing together of episodes based upon Sumerian views of beginnings and introduced as parts of an incantation ritual, the first episode perhaps as part of a ritual to insure the fertility of the soil, and the second as part of a ritual for purifying an individual from disease, or the country from some form of "uncleanliness," in order again to insure the blessings of the fields and general fertility. For the second episode two formulas or "versions" existed, one in the name of Ninšar, the other in the name of Ninkurra. In our text both are given—a combination, as it were, of two "documents," the characteristic mode of composition in the ancient world, so familiar to us from the books of the Old Testament.

## VII

At the close of col. III, beginning with l. 40 and extending through col. IV, another episode is introduced in which again the irrigation or "fertility" motif appears, though, owing to the fragmentary character of the text in the first half of col. IV, as well as to difficulties in the portion of the text preserved, the interpretation is seriously hampered.

In this episode Nintu,<sup>3</sup> Enki, and another being, who, since he has the determinative for deity attached to his name, must also be

<sup>1</sup> See Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, II, 544.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly in old Germanic charms and incantations, such as the Merseburg charms, snatches of primitive myths are introduced as credentials to justify the use and to emphasize the efficacy of the charm itself. My friend, Professor F. B. Gummere, calls my attention to the charm of nine worts or herbs, as an example.

These nine composed of poisons nine,  
Sneaking came snake, tore asunder a line.  
Then took Woden nine wonder twigs,  
He smote an adder, in nine it flew.

The nine wonder twigs stand for nine worts, and Woden crushes this adder with his nine poisons into nine pieces. Another illustration is to be found in an old Germanic charm introducing a reference to the mother-goddess.

Hail to the earth all men's mother,  
Grow and team in god's embrace,  
Filled with food for feeding of men.

It is particularly interesting to find here an allusion to the union between the god and goddess as the result of which the earth is fructified and produces food for men. After the introduction of Christianity, even in Christian legends, allusions to the Christ story are introduced to give force to the incantations themselves.

<sup>3</sup> So, clearly, l. 40 of col. III, as against Ninšar elsewhere in this column. See above, p. 121, note.

regarded as a god, are the chief characters. This is the personage whose name is read Tagtug by Langdon and whom he converts into a human being by translating the determinative for deity as "divine," i.e., a human being who, as the favorite of the gods, escaped from a deluge in which all mankind perished.<sup>1</sup> Since, as we have seen, there is no warrant for assuming that the text speaks of a deluge and still less for regarding Tagtug as a survivor, we may, until evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, regard Tagtug as a deity. As for the reading of the name, besides Tagtug we have three further possibilities, *Tak-ku*, *Shum-tug*, and *Shum-tush*. Of these various readings the most probable is *Tak-ku*,<sup>2</sup> and I shall provisionally adopt this form. The name is followed, col. III, 40; col. IV, 1 (where *Takku* is to be supplied); col. IV, 44 and 48, by the three signs *Sal-li-kul*.<sup>3</sup> Were it not for col. IV, 38 and 43, where we have *Takku* without these signs, one would be tempted to regard the addition as part of the name of the deity. The frequent addition—four or possibly five times out of seven occurrences of the name—suggests at all events that the signs constitute a descriptive epithet of the deity. The occurrence of *Sal*, the common sign for "female," raises the question, indeed, whether *Takku* may not be a goddess, but we should rather expect in that case the sign *nin*. A common meaning for *kul* is *zêru* "seed" (Br. 1668), and if we read *li* instead of *ni* and take this as a phonetic complement to *sal*, just as we have so frequently *sal-la* (Br. 10923–29 and Meissner, *SAI*, 8382–88), the combination might designate *Takku* as "seed of woman" or "offspring." Since *kul*=*rabû* (Br. 1665) as also its equivalent *dim* (Br. 1165–67), the combination with *sal* might have as an Akkadian equivalent *tarbitu* "offspring," just as *dim* with *sal* or *nam*<sup>4</sup>=*nukurtu*

<sup>1</sup> Langdon's etymological jugglery (*Sumerian Epic*, pp. 66 f.) to make *Tag-Tug* a reduplicated form of *tag*=*nâbu* and thus a Sumerian equivalent of the Babylonian Noah is so artificial—to use a mild term—as not to merit serious discussion. See Prince, *JAOS*, XXXVI, 92. Apart from everything else the reduplicated form would be *tag-tag* or *tug-tug*—never *tag-tug*.

<sup>2</sup> There is a deity written *Tag-tag* (*CT*, XXIV, Pl. 48, 15=*CT*, XXV [K 2117], Pl. 27, 4), the son of *Nin-mar*, but the name is to be read apparently *zi-iz-zi-iz*.

<sup>3</sup> Br. 1663, which seems more probable than *Dim* (Br. 1160), as Langdon reads, though the two signs are perhaps identical or have become confused. See the note in Brünnow, p. 88. It is likely that the three signs are also to be added after *Tak-ku*[*ra*], col. III, 40, in view of col. IV, 44.

<sup>4</sup> *Nam* and *sal* interchange to express abstracts as, e.g., *sal-kur* by the side of *nam-kur*=*nukurtu* (Br. 1144).



(Br. 1144). At all events one may tentatively suggest *sal-li kul* (or *sal-li-dim*) as an epithet descriptive of Takku as the offspring of a god and goddess—presumably again of Enki and his consort Nintu. The verb following the first mention of Takku appears to be *igi* = “see” or “in front”—perhaps *igi* with *gin* = *alâku*, so that ll. 39–40 might be rendered provisionally,

Takku, the offspring appeared (or “came forward”)  
Nintu<sup>1</sup> to Takku [the offspring?] spoke,

The speech of Nintu is unfortunately very obscure, though the reference again to the appearance of the marsh (ll. 43–44) as in col. III, 2=22 in the previous episode,<sup>2</sup> suggests some connection with irrigation or with the springing up of verdure. The god Enki is to make the marsh appear (l. 44) and clearly *galu aš-am*, who is “the only one” or “the one who alone is,” is a synonym of Enki, who, it will be recalled, is the god who dwells “alone” (col. I, 7 and 10), the 𒂍𒀭 of the Sumerians. In l. 41 we find the verb *ri* or *rig* in combination with *na*, for which we have the assured value of “purify,”<sup>3</sup> so that we may translate ll. 41–44,

I will indeed cleanse thee, with my cleansing<sup>4</sup> . . . .  
I will declare (?) to thee, my word [I will declare to thee (?)]  
The “one alone” to make the marsh indeed appear,<sup>5</sup>  
Enki to make the marsh indeed appear,  
Showed (?) . . . .

Unfortunately, at this point the tablet breaks off. L. 45 is imperfect, the following line is broken off, and the first seventeen lines of col. IV are so defective that nothing can be made of them. All, therefore, that can be said in regard to this episode is that a god Takku appears on the scene, perhaps as the offspring of Nintu, “the mother of the gods,” and that there is a reference to “purification,” as in the second episode, in association with the appearance of vegetation, since the “marsh” or meadow apparently stands for the fields covered with verdure.

<sup>1</sup> With complement *ri* which suggests a pronunciation *Nintur* by the side of *Nintu* and *Nintud*. Cf. *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 25, 81. *Nin-tu-tu-ri* = *Nin-tu-bab-ri* (cf. Pl. 12, 14, with gloss *ba-ab* for the sign *tu* before *ri*).

<sup>2</sup> Borne out by l. 44—a parallel to l. 43 with Enki in place of “the only one.”

<sup>3</sup> Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 197. Note that *na-ri-ga* is used specifically in the incantation ritual of Eridu, e.g., *CT*, XVI, Pl. 45, 143–44.

<sup>4</sup> Or “my purified one,” as in Poebel’s text, Pl. I, cols. 4, 5, *na-ri-ga-mu*. A verb is to be supplied at the end of l. 41—perhaps “I will make thee clean.”

<sup>5</sup> See above, col. III, 2 and 22.

VIII

In col. IV we have a fourth episode in which the god Enki appears as a gardener,<sup>1</sup> and comes to Takku and offers him some produce of the soil. The abundant irrigation of the fields is also clearly spoken of,<sup>2</sup> so that we have once more the same phenomenon set forth as in the preceding episodes. This suggests that our text is indeed nothing but a series of incantation formulas to promote the fertility of the fields, in the course of which references to a series of primitive myths are introduced, dealing with the manner in which at the beginning of time the world was made habitable and fertile through Enki and those associated with him.

If the reading *giš* at the beginning of ll. 18 and 19 and 35 and 36 is correct,<sup>3</sup> a number of trees are referred to which stood or were placed in a well-watered garden. This part of the text also contained a conversation between Enki and Takku(?) (l. 29), but unfortunately the conversation itself is broken away. With these unsatisfactory indications of a clue, let me make the attempt at least of an interpretation for the closing episode of the column, beginning with l. 38 which introduces Enki and Takku.

Enki set out towards Takku.<sup>4</sup>

At his house<sup>5</sup> (or temple) he cried "open the door, open the door."  
Who indeed art thou?<sup>6</sup>

I am a gardener, the ripe fruit<sup>7</sup> of the tree . . . .

For a price<sup>8</sup> I will give to thee.

<sup>1</sup> L. 29 beginning, "Enki, the gardener." Correct Langdon's rendering accordingly.

<sup>2</sup> Ll. 22-24, "drawers of streaming waters," "filling the ditches and canals with water," etc.

<sup>3</sup> See the corrections to Langdon's text above, p. 95. Langdon takes the sign for *e* "house" and introduces in this way two temples. Apart from everything else, a reference to two temples would be most improbable. The sign is certainly not *e* which is made quite differently in this text, e.g., l. 39. [Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 142, now reads at the end of the line *si-si* for *mal-e*. The first *si* is correct, but I am not sure of the second.)]

<sup>4</sup> The verb is *gir* "foot" and *gin*=*aláku* "go," i.e., "goes to" as in col. III, 10 and 30. See above, p. 125. Langdon failed to grasp the meaning of this line.

<sup>5</sup> [Langdon now (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 142) for some reason wants to read the first sign as *sukkalu* and translates "to his messenger," but the sign is clearly *e* "house," and not at all like the sign for *sukkalu* (col. III, 3, 6, 23, 26). Besides, in that case we would expect *sukkal-a-ni* as in col. III, not *sakkal-na*.]

<sup>6</sup> Question asked by Takku. The following two lines contain Enki's answer.

<sup>7</sup> *Ukuš*, the sign for *kiššu* "cucumber" (Br. 10887) and that for "greens" in general, followed by (*giš*) *mer*—at which point the line breaks off. If we supply *siliš* (Br. 919), we should obtain as the equivalent *siliššū* (Br. 6958)—a tree or plant of some kind.

<sup>8</sup> See corrections to text, above, p. 95.

Takku in the joy of his heart opened the house.  
 By Enki to Takku, the offspring (?),  
 The fruit of the . . . . tree was given to him.  
 The fruit of the . . . . tree (?) was given to him.  
 The fruit of the . . . . tree (?) was given to him.  
 Takku, the offspring (?), with his left hand (?)  
 Seized it (?), with his hand he grasped (?)<sup>1</sup>

It would appear that Enki comes to Takku in the guise of a gardener to offer him certain trees or the fruits of certain trees, and that Takku receives them eagerly and joyfully. Obscure as the scene is as a whole, the central idea appears to be associated with vegetation, and we may perhaps go a step farther and see in the episode an account of how the garden, as a habitation for man, was filled with all kinds of trees. They are planted by Enki—indicated perhaps in ll. 35-37—and handed over to Takku for his use and enjoyment. If the text dealing, as we have seen, with the beginnings of things contains at any point any analogy with the biblical tradition, it is to be sought at this point in a description of a primeval garden as a habitation prepared for mankind. But even this analogy, assuming that it exists, must not be pressed farther than the assumption that man starts out in a condition where his nourishment is provided for him without toil on his part. Paradise is pictured as a garden because it produces what man needs without any effort on his part, in contrast to conditions imposed by agricultural life, where man must labor in the sweat of his face to provide food for himself and for his household.<sup>2</sup>

## IX

In col. V the main episode deals, as I take it, with instructions to someone in the use of a number of plants. Seven lines are missing at the beginning, after which we have a number of lines of which little except the last sign is to be made out. This sign is *sar* or *ma*, in the sense of *arġu* "green," i.e., sprout, or *ašû* "to come forth." Before the sign there are in several lines indications of a verbal

<sup>1</sup> The stem *sig* is amplified by the addition of various parts of the body, e.g., (1) with *sag* "head" = *nakâpu* "to throw or cast down," (2) with *igi* "eye" = *rapâšu* and *natû*, with *meri* "foot," "trample upon." See Delitzsch, *Sumer. GL.*, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> See further on this contrast between the gardener and the agriculturist, Gunkel, *Genesis* (2d ed.), p. 30.

prefix, so that Langdon is no doubt right in supplying the same sign at the end of seven lines (ll. 8–14 of his enumeration) and in rendering “grew” with the sign for plant<sup>1</sup> at the beginning of each line. This would give us at the beginning of the text a description of seven plants which sprouted somewhere—perhaps in the garden introduced in the preceding column. Since, however, later on eight plants are enumerated (ll. 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34—to be supplied without doubt in the last three instances), it is a reasonable conjecture that at the beginning of the text the same number was set forth. This enables us to supply another line at the beginning of the text and would carry with it the further supposition that the plants named in ll. 7–14 are identical with those in ll. 20, 22, etc.

After the enumeration of the eight plants we again encounter a scene between Enki and his messenger Usmû or Isimu, reading, as so ll. 2–3 and 22–23 of col. III:

Enki to make the marsh appear, indeed appear,  
Called his messenger Usmû.

The general sense of the following two lines seems to be clearly the order to Usmû to determine or to announce the “fate”<sup>2</sup> of the plants, each according to its nature,<sup>3</sup> though the difficulty of making out the verb at the end of l. 17 precludes for the present a satisfactory rendering of the entire line.

In the following lines Usmû announces the character of the eight plants, specifying that by order of Enki they may be “cut off” or “plucked out.”

These lines (l. 19–35) read so far as preserved as follows:

His messenger Usmû returned.  
My [king] has commanded the “wood” plant,<sup>4</sup>  
That it may be cut off and eaten.

<sup>1</sup> In l. 14 the sign for “plant,” to wit, *šam*, is preserved.

<sup>2</sup> In l. 17 *šam* “plant” and *nám-bi* “its fate” are clear. The general sense of the line is similar to l. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *A-na-am-be-e a-na-am be-e*. Since *a-na-am* = *minammi* (Br. 11436) “whatsoever,” we are probably not far astray in supposing the entire expression to have the force, “according to its kind, according to its kind,” i.e., each according to its kind, like לְכִינֶהֱרֵהוּ in the first chapter of Genesis.

<sup>4</sup> (*šam*) *giš* suggests that shrubs in general are intended, just as (*šam*) *mun* (= *tabtu* “salt”) in l. 22 would seem to point to growths in a salty and marshy district. [Langdon (*JAO*S, XXXVI, 142) now reads *rim* (instead of *giš*) = *supalu* (*CT*, XIV, Pl. 46 [K 4184], obv. 4) which is possible, though Dr. Chiera and myself saw the sign *giš* quite clearly.]

My king has commanded the "salt" plant,  
 That it may be plucked and eaten.  
 My king has commanded the . . . . plant,  
 That it may be cut off (and eaten).<sup>1</sup>  
 My king has commanded the *a-pa-šar*<sup>2</sup> plant,  
 That it may be plucked and eaten.  
 [My king] the . . . . *tu-tu*<sup>3</sup>-plant (has commanded),  
 [That it may be cut off] and eaten.  
 [My king has commanded the . . . . plant],  
 [That it may be plucked and eaten].  
 [My king has commanded the . . . . plant],  
 That it may be cut off and eaten.  
 [My king] has commanded the cassia<sup>4</sup> plant,  
 [That it may be plucked and] eaten.

Inasmuch as it is said of all the plants that they may be eaten,<sup>5</sup> it is evident that there cannot be a question of any forbidden fruit. Least of all is it conceivable that a plant like the cassia,<sup>6</sup> one of the most common drugs mentioned in the mediaeval texts of the Babylonians and Assyrians,<sup>7</sup> should have been regarded as a forbidden fruit, the eating of which, as Langdon supposes, entailed as a punishment of the forfeiture of immortality.<sup>8</sup> The cassia is placed in our passage on a par with the other plants named, and the most natural interpretation of the passage is to regard it as embodying instructions to man given to him by Usmû in the name of the "King," who is none other than Enki. One is reminded of the passage in Berosus,<sup>9</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> Line to be filled out as so often in this text. See above, p. 104, note.

<sup>2</sup> So read in place of *a-gug*. Some water plant appears to be meant.

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps *a-tu-tu*, as *CT*, XIV, Pl. 18, reverse 6 = 22, col. VI, 4, one of a number of plants comprised under the general designation *baltu*.

<sup>4</sup> *Am-ša-ru* which Langdon correctly identified as *kasû* = cassia, cf., e.g., *CT*, XIV, Pl. 18, obv. 26; Pl. 27 (S. 1846), 7; Pl. 33 (K 9182), 5; and cf. Jastrow, "Medicine of the Babylonians and Assyrians," *Proc. Royal Soc. of Medicine*, March, 1914, p. 25, n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Langdon's *mu-na-ab-teg* ("approached"), at the end of l. 35, rests upon an erroneous reading; the last sign of the line is *bi*, precisely as in ll. 20, 22, etc., i.e., "commanded." [Now, *JAOS*, XXXVI, 142, admitted by Langdon (see above, p. 98).]

<sup>6</sup> Our modern term has come down to us through the medium of Greek from the Akkadian *kasû*.

<sup>7</sup> Still used in the form of senna leaves in our days.

<sup>8</sup> As long as Langdon had merely one fragment of the tablet before him, as was the case when he wrote his preliminary article for the *PSBA*, June, 1914, which showed merely one plant, *am-ša-ru*, there was some excuse for his thesis of regarding the cassia as a forbidden fruit, but upon obtaining the remainder of the tablet, which gave eight plants, he should have abandoned his view instead of trying to save it by conjectural readings devoid of any basis. See above, pp. 98 f.

<sup>9</sup> Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, pp. 21 f., and Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, pp. 76 f.

which he describes the "intelligent" being Oannes coming out of the waters where "the Red Sea borders on Babylonia" (i.e., the Persian Gulf) and giving instructions to man in everything pertaining to the arts and all manner of knowledge, including the founding of temples, settlements of cities, seeds and harvesting of crops, and all things pertaining to the life of man. Oannes, pictured as a man with a fishskin, has long been recognized as Enki or Ea, and it would seem that we have in this portion of Langdon's text the prototype of the tradition reported by Berosus, who also quotes Apollodorus as telling the same story. Berosus speaks in the same passage of the appearance of "two other beings" like Oannes, which suggests that by the side of Enki there was a messenger like our Usmû who actually gave the instruction. Since the passage specifically refers to instruction in agriculture, it would be natural to include directions as to the plants and fruits that are to be cultivated and eaten. It will be observed that in connection with the eating two verbs are used, "cutting" (*kud*) and "plucking" or "tearing out" (*sir*). Are we to see in this distinction the difference between plants the fruit of which grows above ground, which are, therefore, "cut off," and fruits growing under ground or beneath the waters, which are, therefore, "plucked out"? This distinction would then form part of the instructions given to man by Usmû. At all events Usmû is telling man of plants that are to be cultivated in order to be eaten, and not of any plant that is forbidden.

Langdon having gone astray on this point proceeds farther in developing his theory that this portion of our text forms a parallel to the biblical account of the Fall of Man. He bases his conclusion that the eating of cassia brought death into the world on his rendition of ll. 37-38,<sup>1</sup> which he renders as follows:

Ninharsag in the name of Enki<sup>2</sup> uttered a curse:<sup>3</sup>  
The face of life until he dies not shall he see.

<sup>1</sup> L. 36, defective at the beginning and uncertain at the end, is obscure, though it clearly sums up the determination of the "fate" of the plants by the King, i.e., the fixing of their character by Enki. Langdon's rendition of the line is as obscure as the original.

<sup>2</sup> "By the name" would be better, since the underlying idea is that the pronunciation of Enki's name is the basis of the strength of the curse.

<sup>3</sup> *Nam-erim = mamtu* (Br. 2178).

Langdon is probably correct in seeing in these lines a reference to human mortality, though as he renders the line it might mean just the reverse, that man will not see true life till after he has shuffled off the mortal coil, that he will put on immortality after he has put off mortality. We get a better rendering and also a better English by translating with Sayce<sup>1</sup> and Prince,<sup>2</sup>

The face of life when he dies he shall never see (again),

i.e., he shall never come back to this world after he has once left it. The land to which he goes when death sets in is a "land of no return," as we read in the myth of Ishtar's descent into the lower world, which reverts to a Sumerian original.<sup>3</sup> The ban is pronounced upon man that he must die. There is nothing, however, to indicate that death is sent as a punishment. It is simply man's fate decreed by Enki and pronounced by Ninḫarsag, who is here viewed as the mother of mankind—the female principle which we have already encountered under various names: Ninella, Nintu, Ninšar, and Ninkurra.<sup>4</sup> This is entirely in accord with what we know from other references to man's fate in Babylonian-Assyrian literature. So when Gilgamesh, smitten with disease and fearing lest he will die, as did his companion Enkidu, wanders about in search of life, he is told by the maiden Sabitu,<sup>5</sup>

Why dost thou wander from place to place?

The life that thou seekest thou wilt not find.

When the gods created mankind, they fixed death for mankind,

Life they kept in their own hands.

This is genuine Sumerian and Akkadian doctrine which again finds an expression in the opening lines of the Adapa myth, describing

<sup>1</sup> *Expository Times* (November, 1915), p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> *JAOS*, XXXVI, 106. [Langdon, *JAOS*, XXXVI, 143, insists that *en-na* means only "until" and cannot be rendered "at the time when" as Prince proposes. He is right as to the usual meaning of *en-na*, but we must not press the force of particles in any language too hard. Idiomatic usage could easily extend "until, during," and the like to an equivalent of our "when," which the context demands.]

<sup>3</sup> *CT*, XV, Pl. 45, 1. Poebel's text No. 23 in his *Historical and Grammatical Texts* represents such an original Sumerian version. See Langdon in *PSBA*, 1916, pp. 55-59.

<sup>4</sup> *Nin-kurra*, i.e., "lady of the mountain" is hardly more than a different writing of *Nin-ḫarsag*, which likewise means "lady of the mountain."

<sup>5</sup> See Jastrow, *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*, p. 210, and Ungnad-Gressmann, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos*, p. 72.

Adapa as possessing hidden wisdom and power of various kinds, but not immortal life.<sup>1</sup>

To him (Anu) had given wisdom but eternal life he had not given to him.

The thought that death came to man as a punishment for any act of disobedience is totally foreign to the Sumerian-Akkadian point of view, as it is foreign to most ancient peoples. Death is often described in tales among primitive peoples, surviving into the higher stages of culture, as due to a mishap or to an unfortunate mistake, but *never*, so far as I can see, as a punishment for an act of disobedience. Sir James G. Frazer, in his valuable volume on *Belief in Immortality* (I, 60 f.), gives a large number of such stories, told to explain the introduction of death among mankind. He divides them into four types. The one type rests on a loitering messenger like the chameleon sent to announce to men that they will not die, but who is outdistanced by a more energetic lizard announcing the contrary. When the chameleon arrives it is too late. The lizard's decree cannot be recalled, and so man is doomed to die. A second type rests upon a perversion of the message announcing death instead of life, either through malice or forgetfulness. A third type is one in which the secret of immortality is told to some animal instead of to man. And again we find types of stories which explain death as due to an error in eating the wrong food, as, e.g., bananas instead of crabs, but in no case is *deliberate* disobedience introduced as a factor or as the cause. Even in the famous tale in Genesis, the "sin" motif is by no means the chief factor in accounting for death. In fact, in the original form of the third chapter of Genesis, man was punished for eating of the forbidden fruit, not with death, but with hard labor and suffering. It is assumed as a matter of course that man will die, and the curse pronounced upon Adam is that instead of living the life of a gardener in an orchard where he need not work, but merely stretch out his hand and pluck any fruit that he desires, he must henceforth be an agriculturist, tilling the soil in the sweat of his face, to secure his substance, while woman is condemned to physical suffering in bearing children. It is assumed that man will return to the dust from which he was taken, and only in a later stratum of

<sup>1</sup> Ungnad-Gressmann, *Altorientalische Texte und Bilder*, I, 35.



the tale<sup>1</sup> do we find Yahweh driving man out of Paradise for fear that he might eat of the Tree of Life and live forever. Yahweh does not want man to eat of this fruit—that is the point of the story even in this later form.<sup>2</sup> It was the later Pauline theology, combining the story of the two trees, that read into the tale the doctrine that death came as a punishment for an original sin.

All that Langdon says (pp. 53 f.) in his comments upon the passage in our text under consideration and his discussion of the possible relation between what he calls the "Nippurian" and "Eridu" and Hebrew tradition is beside the mark, partly because he lays emphasis on the supposed act of disobedience which, as we have seen, is not referred to in our text, and partly because he, strangely enough, takes "life" in the sense of "good health" in Sumerian (p. 53) and looks upon the phrase, "The face of life until he dies he shall not see" as an indication that man, because of eating of a forbidden fruit, is to be cursed with "bodily weakness"—i.e., to be subject to disease.<sup>3</sup> Our passage simply announces that man is to die. The ban of death is put upon him by the creator Enki—as an inexorable fate. Ninḥarsag—as the great mother—announces the decree and she as well as the Annunaki—a group of deities of minor powers—regret the decision. So much is clear in the closing lines of the incident (ll. 39–47), which for the rest are obscure. Besides Ninḥarsag and the Annunaki, the god Enlil is introduced—an indication that there has been tacked on to the Enki-Usmû episode some myth in which Enlil and his consort Ninḥarsag—that is, the divine pair of Nippur—play the chief rôle. Ll. 39–42:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 3:22. In the original form of the story there was only one forbidden tree—"the tree of knowledge of good and evil," the eating of the fruit of which made man conscious of sex (vs. 7, in contrast to 2:25, "man and his wife naked without being ashamed," i.e., without sex consciousness). The words, "And the tree of life in the midst of the garden" (2:9), are a later insertion, dating from the time of the combination of two independent tales.

<sup>2</sup> In accord with the Babylonian point of view that eternal life was not intended for man and that the gods kept life in their hands.

<sup>3</sup> [This jugglery between "freedom from disease" as the punishment sent for eating of a supposed forbidden fruit (*Sumerian Epic*, p. 82) and "forfeiture of immortality" and now, *JAO*S, XXXVI, 143, "longevity," is again characteristic of the confusion in Langdon's manner of putting a thesis. "Subject to disease," or "loss of longevity," is certainly not synonymous with the "loss of immortality," yet Langdon jumps from one to the other of these three notions as though they meant the same thing.]

<sup>4</sup> Langdon's rendering of ll. 39–42 is, on the whole, correct, but for ll. 43–47 his guess is, I am sure, wide of the mark. I confess, however, that I have no solution to offer that will commend itself as satisfactory. [Langdon (*JAO*S, XXXVI, 144) now adopts my reading for the first sign in ll. 40 and 45, and the fourth sign in l. 42.]

The Annunaki sat down in the dust.  
 Distressed<sup>1</sup> unto Enlil (she) spoke.  
 I, Ninḫarsag, have given thee children and what is my reward?  
 Enlil, in distress replied  
 Thou, Ninḫarsag, hast indeed<sup>2</sup> given me children  
 In my city, *Giš-ma-bi-ri-ni*<sup>3</sup> may thy name be called.

The concluding lines of the columns, in which the "head," "foot"(?) and "eye" of man(?) are referred to, are unintelligible to me.<sup>4</sup>

## X

The first eighteen lines of the last column are too imperfectly preserved to yield any sense. The gods introduced here are again Enlil and Ninḫarsag, by the side of Nannar<sup>5</sup> and possibly Nin-ib.<sup>6</sup> The episode may, therefore, be a continuation of the close of col. V. Beginning with l. 24 and extending to l. 41 we have another series of gods introduced, apparently to act as protectors of man and cattle in order to secure relief from various diseases, and this series leads directly to the closing lines of the text (43-50) which are an invocation of these same gods. The text thus issues in an appeal which reveals that one of the purposes of the composition was to serve as an incantation ritual to be recited as a remedy against sickness. The various myths are, therefore, merely incidental to the real aim, and are introduced with a view of forming the basis for the effectiveness of the formulae of the incantations. The interesting feature of

<sup>1</sup> The first sign is *lul*, not *guš* as Langdon reads. See Br. 7271.

<sup>2</sup> *Nam* in *du-mu-un-nam* appears to be an emphatic post-position. See Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gr.*, § 102.

<sup>3</sup> This is to be taken as the name.

[In his comments to this line in the latest supplementary article (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 144), we have a further illustration of Langdon's curious method of maintaining a rendering while admitting that the reading underlying it is uncertain. In my preliminary list of corrections (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 135) I indicated that what Langdon had taken for the notation for "two" was the sign *a*. He now admits (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 144) that reading "*a* makes better sense," namely, "in my city," and then adds, "The reading 'two creatures' is, however, more probable"—which assumes reading the notation for "two." If this piece of strange reasoning means anything, it must be intended to convey the novel idea that a rendering based on an erroneous reading is preferable to a reading which makes "better sense."]

<sup>4</sup> The subject in each case is *aš-am* "The only one"—i.e., Enki as in col. III, 43. See above, p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> So to be read in l. 7.

<sup>6</sup> In l. 8.

the enumeration of gods and diseases is the play of words between the names of the deities who are to secure healing, and the character of the diseases to be exorcised by calling upon the gods.

Ll. 24-41 read as follows:

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My cow of the fold<sup>1</sup> is sick.

Ab-u has been created for thee.

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My flock<sup>2</sup> is sick.

Nin-tul<sup>3</sup> has been created for thee.

My brother what of thee is sick?

My mouth<sup>4</sup> is sick.

Nin-ka-u-tu has been created for thee.

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My mouth is sick.

Nin-ka<sup>5</sup>-si has been created for thee.

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My genitals<sup>6</sup> are sick.

Nazi<sup>7</sup> has been created for thee.

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My side<sup>8</sup> is sick.

Dazima has been created for thee.

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My life<sup>9</sup> is sick.

Nin-til<sup>10</sup> has been created for thee.

<sup>1</sup> The text shows the sign for "cow" to be read *ab* (Br. 8865) and *tur* "fold" or "stable" (Br. 2664). Cf. *CT*, XVII, Pl. 39, 45. The reading *ab* for the first sign brings about the play with the god *ab-u* in l. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *U-tul* "flock" (Delitzsch, *Sumer. Gl.*, p. 46), with play upon the goddess *Nin-tul* in the following line.

<sup>3</sup> I.e., "lady of the flock." Cf. *CT*, XXIV, Pls. 7, 13, and 23, 143.

<sup>4</sup> *Ka* to form play upon *Nin-ka-utu*, i.e., "the lady who creates the word," *Ka* being the sign for *umatu* "word" as well as for "mouth."

<sup>5</sup> Again, the sign *ka* to form the play upon *Nin-ka-si*, i.e., "the lady who fills the mouth"—perhaps an agricultural deity of plenty. Cf. *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 10, 24, and Zimmern, "Zur Herstellung der grossen Babylonischen Götterliste" (*Berichte der Verhandl. Philol. Histor. Klasse der Kgl. Sächs. Gesells.*, Bd. 63, Heft 4, p. 110).

<sup>6</sup> *Na-zi* with play upon the god *na-zi* in the following line. *Na* is "male" and *zi* "life." The combination may, therefore, stand for "genitals," as Prince has suggested.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *CT*, XXIV, Pl. 48, 9.

<sup>8</sup> *Da-zi* (to play upon *dazima* in the following line), literally the "side of life"—some vital organ.

<sup>9</sup> *Til*=*balaṭu* "life" (with play on *Nin-til*) is likewise used to designate a vital organ, perhaps the liver as the seat of life according to the Sumerian-Akkadian point of view.

<sup>10</sup> Lady of life.

My brother, what of thee is sick?

My reason<sup>1</sup> (?) is sick.

En . . . . me has been created for thee.

It will be observed that eight diseases are enumerated for the cure of which eight deities are created, just as in the previous episode we encountered eight plants. The general purpose of the episode is clear: it embodies instructions given to man apparently by Ninḥarsag in order to secure relief from diseases to which man and the domesticated animals are subject. The point of view is that of a pastoral people. Man and the flocks about him belong together. The antiquity of the myth alluded to in this episode may also be concluded from the primitive conception of driving out the sickness by the power of the *name* of a god or goddess, suggesting some assonantal relationship to the disease itself. The exorcising formula is not accompanied by any medicinal injunctions to serve as an aid to the invocation of an efficient divine name.

In the closing lines (43-50)<sup>2</sup> the same eight deities are directly invoked, with the prayer in the case of some that they may show themselves to have the power ascribed to other gods of the pantheon.

May Abu be as the king of plants.

May Nintul be as the lord of Magan.

May Nin-ka-utu possess (the power of) Ninazu,<sup>3</sup>

May Ninkasi be as Nig(?) -šag-si.

May Nazi be as the lord of strength.<sup>4</sup>

May Dazima have the power of . . . . .

May Nintil be as Nin-iti.

May [En . . . . me] be as the lord of X.<sup>5</sup>

Praise!<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The sign appears to be *me* in the sense of *ḥasisu* "reason" and the like (Br. 2780). The line might then refer to "insanity" as a disease for the cure of which En . . . . is created. [Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 144) now reads the name of the god *En-zag-aga* and in the preceding line *Zag-mu* "my intelligence." I cannot find that *zag* = "intelligence," nor do I find indications of the sign *zag* in either line.]

<sup>2</sup> L. 42 is obscure. Langdon's rendering, "Since grandly they were born, (grandly) they do" [retained by him in *JAOS*, XXXVI, 144 as "correct"!], gives no sense and is unwarranted by anything in the text so far as I can see. His endeavor to find some connection between these deities and some of the antediluvian "patriarchs" in Genesis (*Sumerian Epic*, pp. 52 f.) is so fantastic as to make one wonder whether it is seriously meant.

<sup>3</sup> The goddess of healing.

<sup>4</sup> *Dar = litû* (Br. 3487).

<sup>5</sup> The locality referred to at the beginning of the text. See above, pp. 103 f.

<sup>6</sup> *Zag-sal = tanittu* (Meissner, *SAI*, 4669). Dr. Chiera informs me that in a "Nippur" school text copied by him the same closing exclamation occurs. Langdon refers us also

## XI

To sum up, then, our text consists of a series of episodes that fall within the general category of myths dealing with the Sumerian views of the beginnings of things to serve as a basis and justification for the incantation formulae at the close, which are to be recited in connection with some exorcising ritual in order to free a sufferer from the clutches of the demon (or demons) of disease that hold him fast. The episodes do not form, so far as I can see, any continuous tale, though some of them appear to stand in a close relation to one another. The introduction of different groups of deities in the various episodes point in the direction of an independent series of myths, here united because dealing in a very general manner with the same theme—the beginnings of things. We may distinguish in this way the following episodes:

1. The introduction of life in the world through the formation of rivers and canals to supply cities with water to drink. This is accomplished by Enki in response to the appeal of his daughter (and consort) Ninella (col. I-II, 19).

2. The beginnings of life in the fields and the production of plenty through the sexual union between a god and a goddess—Enki and his consort Nintu (col. II, 20-46).

3. A purification(?) ceremony performed for Usmû, the messenger of Enki, or for a goddess and her offspring—the offspring being the symbol of mankind—told in two versions, in one of which the name of the goddess appears as Nin-šar (col. III, 1-19), in the other as Ninkurra (col. III, 20-38). The purification rite may have formed part of the ancient ritual of Eridu.

4. An episode in which the chief characters are Enki and his consort Nintu and another divine being whose name is probably to be read Takku and who *may* be the offspring of the divine pair. The scene described takes place in a garden as the primeval residence of man, where, as a gardener, he obtained his food without being obliged to toil. The god Enki comes in the guise of a gardener to

to a text published by him recently, but which is inaccessible to me. The notation is also found in No. 26 of Poebel's *Historical and Grammatical Texts*, Pl. XVII. [Langdon (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 145) says that *zag-sal* is "the standard description of epical poetry," but gives no proof for the assertion. Poebel's text is certainly not an "epic," nor can a school exercise be placed in such a category.]

Takku and offers him fruits—which suggests again an episode symbolical of vegetation and plenty. Various trees, producing fruits, appear also to have been given to Takku by Enki (col. III, 39—col. IV, 48).

5. Instructions given by Usmû, the messenger of Enki, in the use of plants—eight being enumerated—forming part of the tradition recorded by Apollodorus and Berosus of a fishlike being who comes out of the water to teach man the various arts and to impart instruction in general (col. V, 1-36).

6. The announcement of man's doom to die—as a decree of Enki, communicated by Ninĥarsag. A new pair of deities is introduced. Enlil, the deity of Nippur, and his consort Ninĥarsag, and by their side the group of less marked deities, known as the Annunaki. They all lament the fate of man, but appear powerless to avert it. The gods who keep life in their hands have decided from the beginning of things that man is to meet death. He passes from this earth never to return (col. V, 37—col. VI, 17 [?]).<sup>1</sup>

7. Announcement by Ninĥarsag to man<sup>2</sup>(?) of the creation of specific gods to afford a cure for various diseases. In all eight gods for eight diseases are enumerated, suggesting some correspondence with the eight plants in the fifth episode (col. VI, 28 [?]-42).

8. The invocation of these eight deities form the close and climax of the incantation text (col. VI, 43-50).

Of these eight episodes or subdivisions, the first and second clearly belong together, while the third and fourth deal with the same theme of fertility and vegetation. Similarly, the fifth and seventh appear to be related, both embodying instructions given to man(?) in addresses made to him. The sixth forms a transition which leads to the seventh, and embodies the Sumerian view of man's fate, which forms the point of departure for the further unfolding of the views of life and death that found an expression in other Sumerian and Akkadian literary productions.

As for the age of the text, to judge from the characters of the copy it belongs to the period before the coming on of the Cassites; it

<sup>1</sup> Just how far the episode extended into col. VI it is impossible to say, owing to the break in the tablet at this point.

<sup>2</sup> Addressed by the goddess with the endearing term "brother."

is certainly not older than 2000 B.C., but since most of the episodes have nothing to do with Nippur, but appear to center around Eridu as the original seat of the cult of Enki or Ea, the text, or at least parts of it, may represent late copies of a much older original.

This would apply particularly to the first two episodes, which place the home of Enki in a mountainous district—directing us to the original home of the Sumerians. In such a district the coming of the rains would naturally be viewed as the condition of life in the universe. The world would then be pictured as taking its start with the rainy season in the fall of the year, whereas in a region like the Euphrates Valley, where water is abundant and the country is inundated through the rising of the streams, the end of the rainy season in the spring and the receding of the waters would mark the beginnings of life and vegetation.<sup>1</sup> In the second episode, however, we have also the transition from Enki as the lord of the terra firma to Enki whose element is the water—more particularly of the Persian Gulf and the two rivers of the valley. Enki is thus a “lord” or “mountain” god who becomes a god of the waters by the migration of the Sumerians to the region of the Euphrates Valley. He retains, however, his ancient name, and it is only in Akkadian compositions that he appears as Ea.<sup>2</sup>

In the fourth episode, with the scene taking place in a garden where all kinds of trees grow, we pass definitely to the Euphrates Valley, rich in vegetation that grows without the labor of man, while the remaining three episodes change the scene from the seat of the Enki cult in the Euphrates Valley to Nippur, the seat of the cult of Enlil and of his consort Ninlil or Ninharsag.

<sup>1</sup> See further on this contrast between the two conceptions, the writer's paper on “Sumerian and Akkadian Views of Beginnings” in *JAOS*, XXXVI, 274-299.

<sup>2</sup> Even in Sumerian proper names it is always Enki and never Ea that is introduced as an element.